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Election Year 1988

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MARCH 21, 1988

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TRB[®]

FROM WASHINGTON

MR. DEMOCRAT

"Yes, that was Mr. Democrat, Robert Strauss, having a quiet lunch yesterday at the Jockey Club with First Lady Nancy Reagan. . . ." —*Washington Post*

Did I miss the primary where they elected Bob Strauss Mr. Democrat? Can we petition for a recall? Are Democrats allowed to vote, or is it entirely up to the likes of William Buckley and George Will?

Buckley selected Strauss as his Democratic co-questioner in last year's candidate debates. Will has touted Strauss twice for president and once for secretary of state in the past few months.

When he's not being called "Mr.

Democrat," Strauss, aged 69, is labeled an "elder statesman" or "wise man." In fact, he's "the Capital's Leading Wise Man," according to the headline on a recent *New York Times* puffier that was worth a pile to his influence-peddling operation. Strauss, oozed the *Times*, is "a senior statesman who bridges partisan rivalry and ideological factionalism. The capital needs such elders, people known for their straight talk and sound advice."

Strauss is being touted, not least by Strauss, as the potential broker of a deadlocked Democratic nomination fight. Even in the course of dismissing that idea, Albert Hunt of the *Wall Street Journal* says that the next Democratic president would "be a fool not to put Mr. Strauss in his Cabinet."

Why? Wherein, exactly, lies the greatness of Robert Strauss? Is it his devotion to liberal values? His deep insight into the issues facing our nation? Hardly. Strauss's rare public remarks on public issues are embarrassingly banal. For depth and passion, they make his pal Bob Dole (with whom he shares a Florida winter retreat) seem like Henry Kissinger. Writing on trade recently in the *Post*, Strauss opined: "The American people want something done about it. . . . There is no time like the present to get the job done, and the key players all

know it. . . . There is nothing to prevent a good, sound bill from being worked out . . ." etc., etc. This is best translated as: "Goddammit, I want Bob Strauss's name in the paper tomorrow."

Strauss is not the sort to maintain a principled disagreement with anyone. I was astonished to read him quoted in the *Times* a few months ago saying that Ann Lewis, a far-left Democratic activist, was unfit to be party chairman. Not that he doesn't think this—he surely does—but why would he say it? Sure enough, the next day's paper carried an "Editor's Note" explaining that the quotation from Strauss "omitted the context" and should have added, "I think she is one of the very credible and sensible political voices in this town and country." It's a testament to Strauss's clout that he got the *Times* to print such a ridiculous correction, and a hint of how he got that clout that he wanted one.

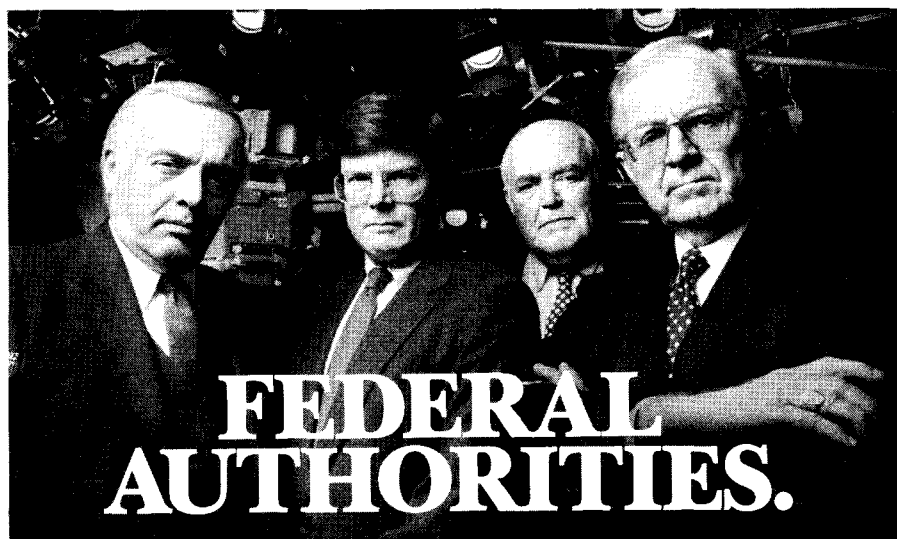
Ordinarily, of course, Strauss's splendid ideological agnosticism tilts him to the right, not the left. It's not that Strauss has conservative beliefs. He has *no* beliefs, except for his cardinal principle that all the key players ought to sit down and work this sucker out, goddammit.

So what's the secret? Is it his record of devoted public service? Strauss was a successful fund-raiser and party chairman in the early 1970s. During the Carter years he built up his résumé on the George Bush model: a few months each as Special Trade Representative, President's Counselor on Inflation, Middle East negotiator, and chairman of the re-election campaign. His achievements in any of these posts were not remarkable (or even, regarding inflation and the Middle East, noticeable). But they got him the title of ambassador and lots of new clients when he returned to his law firm in 1981. Since then the firm has become one of Washington's largest and most profitable.

But, as the *Times* says, "His real influence in Washington derives not from his past titles, but from the force of his personality and the quality of his judgment." "Judgment" has become the preferred euphemism these days for what Washington fixers offer, now that Michael Deaver (another Strauss pal) has discredited the formerly favored "access."

The idea that someone like Strauss is a great fount of "judgment" is about one-third humbug directed at potential critics, about one-third humbug directed at his customers themselves—business clients, presidents, journalists—and about

continued on page 41



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Brigadier General Joe Foss is former two-term governor of South Dakota, former pro football commissioner, Congressional Medal of Honor winner, and president-elect of the National Rifle Association.

I know you're concerned about the detectability of firearms at our nation's airports.

So am I. So is the NRA.

And if you're like me, you're also concerned about protecting the rights of law-abiding Americans.

That's why you must know the facts about Senator Howard Metzenbaum's bill, S.465. It neither *detects* firearms nor *protects* rights.

At first he claimed his bill bans no guns. Then that it might ban a few. Now he admits it will ban several. In truth, S.465 will outlaw many popular models

of legal firearms — over five million firearms in all. That won't sit well with untold millions of sportsmen and Americans who own firearms to protect their homes and families.

Worse still, S.465 as offered gives the Secretary of the Treasury discretion to ban millions of other firearms.

But does S.465 provide for detectability of firearms at airports? No. The "plastic gun" it seeks to ban doesn't exist. And ironically, it provides no strategy for improving security at America's airports.

If you really want to address detectability, call Metzenbaum's bluff. Senator James McClure has a better bill, S.2051, that ensures all firearms will be fully detectable. *Without banning a single legal firearm owned by American citizens.*

I've learned that if you don't respond to lies, people believe them. Don't let a lie become law.

CORRESPONDENCE

WEIGHTY MATTERS

To the editors:

Fred Barnes's article on "The Unbearable Lightness of Being a Congressman" (February 15) was revealing, but it hardly profiles a "typical" congressman. Representative John Hiler's allegiance to supply-side economics and to the Republican Party—let alone his narrow 47-vote margin of victory in the last election—make him truly unusual in the House. (As Robert Kuttner points out in the same issue, the vast majority of representatives hold safe seats and therefore enjoy a level of job security Hiler lacks.) Barnes also leaves the false impression that only a few—"at most three dozen"—representatives wield power, while the rest address only parochial issues. Since 1980 I have worked for several members of the House and have seen frustration rise with redundant work and congressional deadlock. Yet I also have watched as several different cliques controlled key votes on a wide range of national issues. No single set of representatives has called all the shots. In addition,

many young members have shown that power does not lie only in the hands of the most senior.

Clearly Congress is suffering from many problems—flawed campaign finance systems, the monster of continuing resolutions, etc. Yet with fashionable cynicism, Barnes overstates the burdens and underestimates the effects of congressional service.

ROB MCCORD

Executive Director

Congressional Clearinghouse on the Future
Washington, D.C.

MORE SECRETS OF THE TEMPLE

To the editors:

As President Carter's adviser on inflation, I can supply a brief historical footnote to Robert Samuelson's excellent review of William Greider's book about the Federal Reserve ("The Return of the Living Fed," February 22). According to the book, President Carter's "chief economic advisers" tried to dissuade Paul Volcker and the president from embarking on the restrictive monetary policy that ultimate-

ly produced both the most severe recession since the 1930s and a surprisingly rapid deceleration of inflation.

I cannot contradict the essential truth of that statement. I was formally a member of that advisers' group, and though I played no substantial role in the formulation of macroeconomic policy, I did not disagree with what Paul Volcker was planning to do. In a private conversation we had in late August 1979, shortly before he instituted that radical change in policy, as the Greider book graphically describes, he said something like the following: "Our anti-inflation program is really failing; the wage and price standards are losing credibility, and we still haven't succeeded in balancing the federal budget. I've got the only remaining weapon against inflation in town; sooner or later I'm going to have to use it." I agreed.

My agreement was reluctant. Our hope—the only rational and humane one—had been for a "soft landing": that we could bring inflation gradually under control without a recession. And perhaps, had it not been for the second explosion of OPEC prices between December 1978 (two months after I became "Inflation Czar") and 1980, we might have succeeded. But we had not: by the first quarter of 1980, prices were rising at an 18 to 20 percent annual rate. And I am not likely to forget, as Greider obviously has, the intense feeling of frustration in the country at large with our apparent failure, and the spreading "social meanness" (as Irving Howe characterized it) that it engendered—a meanness amply exhibited in any number of policies of the Reagan administration after 1980.

I achieved a small amount of temporary notoriety by predicting that if we did not succeed in bringing inflation under control, we would sooner or later pay a heavy price. Nothing in our subsequent experience justifies Greider's apparent belief that such a price could have been avoided, or can be the next time around, unless and until we find other, more rational ways of achieving the requisite social discipline—whose absence showed up then in chronic inflation and shows up now in our growing international indebtedness.

ALFRED E. KAHN

Ithaca, New York

continued on page 41

Allies in public— privately they couldn't stand each other.

In this candid memoir—which won the French Academy prize for history book of the year—diplomat Raoul Aglion illuminates the profound conflicts between FDR and de Gaulle (two world leaders) with the insight and humor only one who was there can provide.

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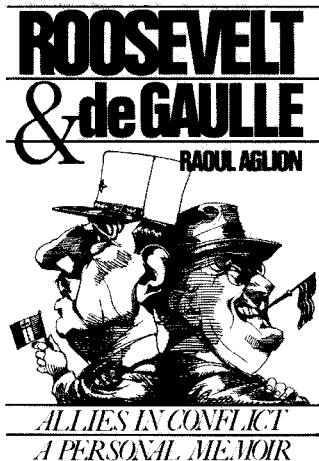
—Pierre Salinger,
Former Press Secretary
to President John F. Kennedy

"A fascinating account... informative and compelling. Mr. Aglion sheds light on American-French relations at France's hour of maximum vulnerability, and shows how attitudes formed then persisted into the postwar era... I could not recommend it more highly."

—David Eisenhower,
Author of *Eisenhower at War 1943-45*

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—John Gross,
The New York Times



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THE NEW REPUBLIC

MARCH 21, 1988

SPIELBERG'S LAMENT

Last week the men who brought you gremlins and wookies came to Washington to defend America from bad taste. The producer-directors Steven Spielberg and George Lucas testified before a Senate subcommittee against all forms of tampering with original works of art without the permission of the artist. "Art is a distinctly human endeavor" is how Lucas elegantly put it. "We must have respect for it if we are to have any respect for the human race." Spielberg and Lucas are lobbying for a federal law guaranteeing the "moral rights" of artists—as well as their contractual and economic rights—to the work they have produced.

What Lucas means by moral rights is actually quite specific. He and other artists claim that regardless of who owns their work or its copyright, they have transcendental rights to its "paternity" and "integrity." According to the Berne Convention, an international copyright treaty the United States is about to join, authors have an overriding right to insist that a work be attributed to them; they can also object to any distortion or damage to the work that harms their artistic reputation.

If a law were passed enforcing these rights, Frank Capra's estate could legally sue the studio for the colorization of *It's A Wonderful Life* if they didn't like the look of a bright pink Jimmy Stewart. With "moral rights," Sir David Lean could make sure his *Doctor Zhivago* couldn't be spliced to fit a late-night movie slot. Boris Pasternak, in turn (if he were alive), could sue to prevent the choice of Julie Christie as Lara. The painter whose restaurant mural was wrecked by a door being constructed in the middle of it could sue the owner. In theory, egocentric journalists could take TNR to court for messing around with their copy.

Even under current law, any artist is free to negotiate such rights as part of the contract when he or she sells the work in question. Woody Allen negotiated a contract that allows him to retain complete control over his work. In principle, any artist can do that. Even without such a contract, the right to correct attribution is so basic (it has been upheld in a couple of cases) that it is implicit in any current copyright contract on the basis of "fair dealing." On the question of integrity, the U.S. Copyright Act already prevents anyone from making a derivative work

without the author's consent. "Derivative work" includes a whole range of adaptations of an original, including editorial revisions. If these can be legally proven to amount to "mutilation," the artist can sue. There are also laws of defamation to protect a travesty of an artist's reputation.

Still, there is no general moral rights protection in American law, and many of the protections implicit in current law do not have a strong record of being upheld. Most of the cases in which they have been supported have dealt with performers', rather than authors', rights. (The central case protected the right of a film actor to be properly identified.) Seven states have already passed moral rights laws to clear the matter up. Realistically, most artists don't have the clout of Woody Allen, and can't both protect their creative interests and earn a living.

We believe that artists should be granted greater control over their work and how it can be used. That does not mean we support a sweeping moral rights provision for any sale of any art. By throwing a time-consuming and expensive artist's veto into sales, it could seriously depress the market for film, fine arts, and literature, to the detriment of artists and public alike. A bill sponsored by Senator Ted Kennedy would force owners to give artists—or, worse, their quarrelsome estates—a cut in all future sales, playing bureaucratic havoc with the art market. It would throw into chaos not only the rights of owners, but also the rights of artists to bargain away their work for a price the market will pay. That's a right Spielberg and others have been all too happy to exercise for massive—and legitimate—financial gain. They should be allowed to keep it.

A blanket provision would also place intolerable demands on editors, marketers, and reproducers of art, who, under pressure of deadlines or particular markets, need to act swiftly or lose business. And it also too easily confers authorship of certain art forms on a single individual. Editors have been known, on occasion, actually to improve an article. For that matter, why should the director have sole control over a film? Why not the author of a book adapted to the screen? Or the producer?

The truth is that the legal principles for greater artists'

control over their work are already implicit in American law. They need only be more regularly and rigorously brought out by juries and courts. The Supreme Court recognized in its 1985 ruling in *Harper & Row v. The Nation* that "the author's control of first public distribution implicates . . . his personal interest in creative control" as well as his economic interest.

Artistic contracts can be modified in a way that recognizes the interests of all the parties involved: artist, owner, and public. For example, sales of fine art could be made with a legal stipulation that the owner commit himself not to damage or mutilate the work of art in any way, while retaining all other rights over it. That safeguards artistic concerns without laying waste to an art market that benefits artists and owners alike.

Art—especially public art—is not the sole preserve of the artist. It is something bought, interpreted, marketed, and given meaning by society as a whole. No one within

that process deserves a sweeping veto on what happens to it, or even what it means, including the artist himself. The free market has operated in the art world without apparent cultural disaster for several centuries now largely because it recognizes that fact. So should the creator of the wookie.

NOTEBOOK

□ **BORK'S LATEST BITE:** Last year's Senate rejection of Robert Bork for the Supreme Court seems to be turning into a permanent scar on the consciousness of the American right, one of those historic liberal betrayals that will be replayed again and again on the conservative mental VCR. But the picture is already getting blurred. In lectures and interviews, Judge Bork has been interpreting his defeat as

THE ZEITGEIST CHECKLIST

BY CHARLES PAUL FREUND

This
Week

Last
Week Weeks
on Chart

1. THE BIG DITCH ✓

*

3

Panama. Who's ditched whom? Following Delvalle's dramatic effort to oust Noriega, it's Delvalle who's in hiding and Noriega who's benefiting from U.S. trade decisions. The U.S. may have played a big card based on faulty expectations of a popular Panamanian uprising.

2. DOPE HEADS ✓

—

1

Drugs '88. First, there was the "narc," who chased pushers and users. Later came "narcoterrorism," either Fidel or the *contras* exploiting the drug trade for political purposes. Now comes "narcomilitarism," governments that are the drug trade. Time to dig out C. M. Kornbluth's 1953 SF novel, *The Syndic*, about a nation run by gangsters, and the grateful populace that gets what it wants.

3. COTTON CANDOR ✓

—

1

Super Tuesday. Conventional wisdom is that Southern Democrats have shot themselves in the foot—that their effort to stop the party's slide leftward is undone by Jackson and Robertson, finishing the Dems in the South. Maybe. But party labels have little emotional content anymore, and one great Super Tuesday question remains unanswered: Whom has Jackson taken votes from?

4. DON'T SEE IT NOW ✓

—

1

Censoring TV. The Israel-South Africa parallel may be facile, but their situations meet at TV coverage. Israel's moral currency has been squandered in a welter of beatings footage, while South Africa is a case study in consciousness-lowering. Where once Western anti-apartheid passion encouraged reformist rhetoric, now South Africa clamps down tightly to a yawning West. No wonder the Israelis are trying to deny TV access.

5. DOWN PAT ✓

*

5

Robertson. Robertson's succession of foolish statements has left not only him looking silly, but his press as well. He was tagged accurately as out of his depth to begin with. When he won votes,

*Item resurfaces in the Zeitgeist after at least one week's absence.

he was presented as if he were credible. The equation of votes with stature is ridiculous, but telling.

6. NO HAPPY RETURNS ✓

*

2

Taxes '88. Every year coverage of tax collection acts as a national steam valve. Tax preparation is a difficult process that becomes only more difficult. That even IRS employees can't get it right sure is a hoot. There is never any follow-up inquiry regarding the IRS's general competence despite a reported 25 percent telephone advice error rate.

7. E PLURIBUS UNUM ✓

—

1

Soviet unrest. Demonstrations in Armenia and elsewhere highlight a Soviet problem to which the West has paid little attention: its repressed non-Russians. Some observers think the unrest is part of a larger phenomenon going on worldwide: devolutionism, in which the historically recent and often artificial nation-state will gradually devolve into component, heterogeneous communities.

8. ARREST AND CONSENT ✓

—

1

Campaign finance. It is possible that if Senator Byrd had not had Senator Packwood arrested and dragged into the Senate chamber, there would have been no popular coverage of the campaign finance debate. Yet everybody agrees that this issue is probably American democracy's most pressing problem. A moment of substantive coverage followed the Abbott & Costello short subject.

9. LOOKING BACKWARD ✓

*

9

Decline. From defense contractors to stockbrokers to candy-makers, a significant number of advertising appeals are using historic imagery. This may be merely fashion. But it may also be a sign of the ripening of American culture. Rarely have American products or firms traded on their history. Perhaps the radiant past is more pleasing than the apparent future.

10. DEAD MAN'S CURVE ✓

—

1

Voodoo. The confluence of Haiti's disastrous politics and a steep rise in domestic mysticism has brought voodoo out of the shadows. One best seller and three movies have turned up, with feature pieces everywhere from *Newsweek* to *Grand Street*. There's a kind of *bon sauvage* respect at the intellectual end, but the pop end is still able to milk fear of Dark Powers out of it.

a defeat for intellect itself, with barbarous consequences. Ambitious lawyers, he claims, have been withdrawing scholarly articles from publication for fear they will come back to haunt. The lesson of his experience, he says, is: "Express only noble sentiments and arrive at only non-controversial results." It's undoubtedly true that Bork's intellectual paper trail is the reason the Senate rejected him. What he conveniently overlooks is that it's also the reason President Reagan nominated him in the first place. If he'd spent his life expressing only uncontroversial sentiments, he'd still be teaching at Yale (if, indeed, he would have gotten even that far). Intellectual advocacy is not the only route to the Supreme Court, obviously, but it's the route Bork chose, a route that brings its own legitimate perils. It's greatly to Bork's credit that he has spent his life as a fierce battler in the war of ideas. It's sad that he seems to be adopting the right-wing troglodyte attitude that battlers on the other side are not merely mistaken but somehow cheating.

□ THAT ELUSIVE MEAN STREAK:

Dole, Stung by Loss, Lashes Out at Bush in South

—*New York Times*, February 19

Fire-Eating Performance Absent in South

Dole Refrains From Assailing Bush

—*Los Angeles Times*, same day

(thanks to John J. Pitney Jr., Claremont, California,
and Mark R. Troy, Los Angeles, California)

□ DEFICIT RATIONALIZATION NO. 117: In an interview on February 25 with Lou Cannon of the *Washington Post*, President Reagan remarked cheerily that the federal deficit that has ballooned during his tenure is less worrisome than many suppose because so much of it (\$150 billion a year these days) is interest on past debt. "Instead of it being something that's just disappearing down a rat hole, it's a kind of a redistribution of national wealth." We've been predicting in these pages for several years that some politician would take up the argument that interest on the federal debt is really a redistribution program, but we never dreamed it would be Ronald Reagan! We thought Reagan opposed redistribution programs. This one, though, is redistribution, Republican-style. Interest is a redistribution program from the poor and the middle class to the rich—who hold the largest share of federal debt, and who benefit generally from the increased demand for capital caused by federal borrowing. It's extraordinarily revealing for Reagan to suggest that money the government spends on schools, roads, research, and so on—not to mention redistribution programs for the poor—is "down the rat hole," whereas interest paid to bondholders is not. Reagan's dizzy logic seems to be that interest payments are received by Americans who then can save them or spend them on something else. Of course this is true of all federal spending. (Has Reagan been reading Keynes?) Ironically it is *less* true of interest than of other federal

spending, since—thanks to Reaganomics—more and more federal debt is held by foreigners.

□ DEMOCRATIC RESISTANCE:

New Contra Aid Plan Has House Democrats Split

—*Los Angeles Times*, February 21

Democrats Said to Agree on Contra Aid Package

—*New York Times*, same day

(thanks to Stewart Y. Silverstein, Los Angeles, California)

□ CORRECTION: In a January 18 editorial on the situation in Israel, we took *New York Times* columnist Anthony Lewis to task for recommending a halt to Jewish settlements in the occupied territories when such settlements "have long since stopped." Although a freeze on new settlements has been official Israeli government policy for several years, established settlements have continued to expand, and a few additional settlements have been established with government acquiescence if not approval.

□ GREENSPAN AND GREENBACKS:

Greenspan comments lift flagging dollar sector

—*Financial Times*, February 24, page 26

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

Greenspan has little impact

—same paper, same day, page 31

The Super Tuesday fiasco.

RED-FACED WHITE BOYS

Williamsburg, Virginia

The Democratic Leadership Council, founded by Southerners and foreign policy hard-liners in 1985 to move the Democratic Party to the right, has become its own Trojan horse. It has nonetheless succeeded in its goal of rescuing the Democratic Party from the clutches of special interest groups—though hardly according to blueprint.

The likelihood that Jesse Jackson would finish first or second on Super Tuesday was only the most obvious of several ironies confronting DLC leaders as they gathered here for their third annual winter conference. The DLC's founding assumption was that the "McGovernized" Democratic Party, with its left-wing foreign policy, its special interest caucuses, its activist-driven fiscal excess, and its dependence on big labor, could never win the white South, the postindustrial West, or even the socially conservative workaday neighborhoods of the ethnic North. To win the presidency, the Democratic machinery would have to be recaptured by the party's

elected officials. Super Tuesday was to be a key instrument of that strategy.

Super Tuesday has turned into the most unfortunate political rampart since the Maginot Line. No prominent center-right Southerner hopped aboard the vehicle the DLC so carefully designed. Instead, Super Tuesday has become a showcase for a black activist, Jesse Jackson, and a Northern foreign policy liberal, Michael Dukakis. Furthermore, it could well have the effect of filtering out the one Southerner in the race, Al Gore. Gore, neither as conservative nor as down-home as Sam Nunn or Chuck Robb to begin with, never quite fit the DLC script. With less than a week to go till Super Tuesday, Gore's advisers were struggling to reposition him as a down-and-dirty populist. But at the DLC's Williamsburg presidential debate, Gore himself continued to display just those qualities that have endeared him to the party's moderate liberal elite: an intellectual keenness, a fine sense of nuance, an expertise in foreign policy arcana, and a modest, almost formal personal reserve.

More ironic, the rise of Richard Gephardt (a DLC founder whose views have dramatically shifted) seems to disprove the central DLC premise that a hard-line foreign policy is the key to the hearts of Southern and white male voters. Gephardt is still vulnerable to the charge that his stance on trade is mere nativism, and his incongruous boast that he voted for the 1981 Reagan tax program because it cut taxes for working people is a desperate attempt to make a lemon into lemonade. But his formula seems to be working.

THUS a final irony: a centrist organization created by party conservatives to distance Democrats from big labor has helped launch the candidacy of an effective populist who is the darling of the industrial unions. If Jesse Jackson could offer tongue-in-cheek congratulations to Chuck Robb for inventing Super Tuesday, Lane Kirkland might thank DLC director Alvin From for giving the labor movement and the Democratic Party Richard Gephardt, a man carrying more water but somehow less baggage for the AFL-CIO than even Walter Mondale.

And all of this was done with corporate money. The DLC's sumptuous Williamsburg feast and its ongoing staff expenses are underwritten by a long list of corporate "sponsors," "patrons," and "friends," including Textron, TRW, Boeing, Dow Chemical, the Tobacco Institute, American Cyanamid, and so on. Its well-lubricated party train from Union Station had on board at least as many corporate patrons as representatives, senators, and governors.

Yet in an odd way the DLC has proved its point. DLC leaders always disputed the caricature of the DLC as the white boys' caucus. By 1987, in fact, the DLC was so successful institutionally that it had virtually become the Democratic Party. Its members included not just the Robbs and the Nunn but also bona fide progressives such as Arkansas's Bill Clinton, South Dakota Senator Tom Daschle, and much of the House Democratic

Caucus. Moreover, its strategy of bringing elective officials back to prominence in the party machinery has succeeded, producing a more unified party—though not around a conservative foreign policy agenda. And, just as the DLC founders hoped, the party's "special interests" have indeed become far less visible and far less meddlesome. Its recent substantive proposals, including one on "democratic capitalism" and another on national service, have offered intelligent policy and smart politics. In effect, to create the unity it espoused, the DLC had to sacrifice its own parochialism.

ROBERT KUTTNER

Who on earth are they?

GARY'S GROUPIES

Boston

"How many Hart supporters does it take to screw in a light bulb? All ten, but only one gets paid." This joke made the rounds in campaign circles up here during the New Hampshire primary. In fact, baseball legend Mordecai "Three-Finger" Brown could count on both hands the number of Gary Hart's full-time workers. And no one on the Hart campaign is getting paid. No one has an official position, either. "There's only one title in this campaign, and that's candidate," one untitled volunteer in New Hampshire told me. "And we know who that is."

Dave Nelson certainly does. The No. 2 man in Hart's Boston office, he must write three more papers before he can get his undergraduate degree from UMass-Amherst. The topics of the papers are "Gary Hart and the Media," "Gary Hart and the Primary System," and "My Experiences with the Hart Campaign." The essays originally were to be based upon Hart's 1984 campaign. Indeed, Dave originally was a member of UMass-Amherst's class of 1984. But he didn't feel he could write the conclusions to his papers. Not yet. "I didn't feel the story was over," he says. "I didn't think he got a fair shake in '84 and wanted to wait until after '88 to finish them." After Hart withdrew from the race last May, Dave received calls from his professors back at school. "They said that I had run out of excuses for not writing the papers. They said the story was over. They were wrong."

But after Hart's disastrous performance in Iowa and New Hampshire, it looks as though Dave will be able to put the finishing touches on his papers and go to law school. A 27-year-old, he has spent the last six years of his life working for Hart. He was distraught when Hart quit the race last May and worked hard to convince him to re-enter. A true believer, he thinks Hart acquitted himself quite well last spring. "I was only angry that he let the media assassinate him," he says. "My mother has made

mistakes in her life. That doesn't mean I don't love her."

Dave Nelson is typical of those still willing to work for Hart in his "come-back" phase. Hart has struck a chord among at least a few disaffected souls who seem to have a grudge against the reality with which they are still in contact. Dave is oblivious to the shortcomings exposed last spring. Each of the workers I met referred affectionately to the candidate as "Gary," to the press as "they," and to the Donna Rice affair and Hart's subsequent implosion as "the events of last spring." Hart's time off is known as "the sabbatical."

Dave's support is on the extreme side. He drives a Mazda 626XL with the license plate "HART 88." He took it back and forth between Boston, New Hampshire, and Cape Cod, where he is employed as deputy sheriff. During New Hampshire he returned to the Cape one day a week to make a few dollars serving papers. Though he says he is in deep financial disarray, he had to help Hart. During Hart's "sabbatical" he organized students in the Boston area to convince Hart to get back into the race. "He turned my life around. I couldn't turn my back on him."

If Mike Dukakis's message is that he can export the Massachusetts Miracle to the whole country, Hart's message is that Hart can do for America what he did for Dave. "Gary has had a positive impact on my life and I'm sure he can do the same for the country," he tells voters. Dave is entirely sincere. "He's been a personal friend," he told me. "Six years ago I was disillusioned, cynical at the world, and had a rocky home situation. I was looking for somebody I could believe in, someone who could convince me there was still hope for tomorrow. . . . Gary showed me what JFK was to him. He gave me something I could never give back to him. He gave me self-confidence."

There are, of course, people working for "Gary" whose connection with Hart is less intimate, if no less pathological. "Mike," 30, works for the Massachusetts state government. He took a leave of absence from his job to put in 60 to 70 hours a week answering phones for Hart. He didn't want me to use his name for fear of reprisals from his superiors, all of whom support Dukakis. Mike is "disgusted with the way [the press] treated him." Mike doesn't think a candidate's personal life should have any bearing on his public persona. "If I had a good idea at work and a rumor got started that 'Mike's doing this in private so his ideas are no good,' that wouldn't be fair, would it?" he asked. I asked him whether such a thing ever had happened to him. "Well," he answered, "you could say that. Yeah, it did, actually."

"Pete" is another Massachusetts civil servant, in his mid-40s, who didn't want his name used. He echoed a common theme among Hart workers when he said that more attention needs to be given to the role of the media in the election process. An Irishman who lived for several years in England before moving to the States 20 years ago, Pete tried to explain an elaborate theory I never quite understood regarding the Murdochization of the American press, incorrectly noting that the executive editors of the *National Enquirer*, the *Star*, and the *Miami Herald* are all for-

mer Rupert Murdoch henchmen from Fleet Street.

There were also a few students working on the Hart campaign in New Hampshire. Manny is a BU sophomore who didn't support Hart the last time around. He spent the summer in the Philippines, where he says he observed firsthand the way the international economy works. Most Americans don't understand the international flow of money, Manny told me, but Hart does. "Hart's got a plan to develop the Third World," he says. "He thinks like an international economist." Manny pointed to a copy of the little white booklet Hart has been waving across the country and gave me the thumbs-up sign. "Do you understand the difference between understanding and comprehension?" he asked. After a pause during which I realized that he expected an answer, I said that, yes, I did. "Hart comprehends," he said.

Rob Lamb was president of Skidmore's junior class. But when he heard Hart announce his re-entry into the race, he felt he "couldn't pass up such an opportunity to rise through a campaign." He put in 16-hour days seven days a week running the Nashua area for Hart. "If I'd gone to work for any of the biggies with all the money," he says, "I'd start by licking envelopes and eventually get promoted to writing the names on the envelopes. Here I lick the envelopes, write names on them, and write the letters that go inside the envelopes." He plans to return to Skidmore for a day in April to convince his classmates to reelect him for the fall semester. He thinks that the hands-on experience he's gained on the Hart campaign will offset his abdication in the eyes of his classmates.

"Let the people decide" was Hart's re-entry rallying cry. One thing the people seem to have decided, without realizing it, is that it's time Dave Nelson got his degree.

STEVEN LICHTMAN

Steven Lichtman is a former TNR reporter-researcher.

CAMPAIGN '88

BLESSED ARE THE KINGMAKERS

GARY HART'S latest illusion is that he's going to be one of the kingmakers at the Democratic National Convention in July. That is reason enough to stay in the presidential race, he says. His people "have a right to be heard in those deliberations, particularly if any decisions at the convention are made behind closed doors." Sorry, Gary, there'll be backroom negotiations, but you won't be invited. The kingmaker will be Jesse Jackson. Though far short of a majority (2,082 delegates) and thus unable to claim the nomination, Jackson will have enough delegates

to crown another candidate as Democratic nominee. He'll have a price, though, and probably a high one. All Jackson got out of his 1984 campaign was a nationally televised speech at the convention. He'll want more this time.

Republicans also will have a kingmaker: Pat Robertson. Like Jackson, he now thinks the nomination (1,139 delegates) is within his grasp. But he'll soon learn better. Then he will accept his real role in the GOP presidential race—as the guy who decides whether George Bush or Robert Dole becomes the nominee. Robertson leans to Dole, but he too will exact a price for his nod. Chances are, his price will be small. This is his first campaign, and he'll be happy to have emerged as a major political figure, conservative leader, and potential presidential candidate in the future.

For Jackson and Robertson to be kingmakers, there must be no undisputed front-runners when the primaries end on June 8. This is likely, but not certain. If a Democratic candidate is within 200 or so delegates of a majority on June 8, he should be able to patch together enough elected officials ("superdelegates") and other stray delegates to clinch the nomination. Walter Mondale was about 40 delegates shy the day after the primaries in 1984, and he picked up enough by noon to claim the nomination. Michael Dukakis has the best prospects for achieving this in 1988, but don't bet on it. His strategists figure that if all goes reasonably well on Super Tuesday and afterward, he'll have 1,700 to 1,800 delegates on June 8. A more realistic projection is 1,500 max, which isn't enough. William Carrick, the campaign manager for Richard Gephardt, guesses that Gephardt will be approaching 1,800 delegates, but he's overly optimistic by 300 to 600 delegates. Al Gore, if he's still in the race, won't be close to 1,500. Of course, if the 645 superdelegates got together to thwart Jackson, they could give the nomination to someone with as few as 1,500 delegates from the primaries. This isn't likely. Enter Jackson, with a deal.

Of all the candidates, Bush has the best shot at wrapping up a presidential nomination on June 8. Richard Bond, Bush's political director, says that if Bush does "as well as we think is probable on Super Tuesday," he then will win the Illinois primary a week later. That, in turn, will create a "delegate imperative for George Bush that is unstoppable, similar to Ronald Reagan in 1980." A juggernaut, Bond means. This scenario is possible, but not probable. On the other hand, Dole has practically no chance of being within striking distance of the nomination on June 8. He knows this, and also knows he'll need an ally to win the nomination. Enter Robertson, with a deal.

THERE ARE two popular misconceptions about brokered nominations. One, that we'll have "brokered conventions." No way. The bargaining will begin in April or May and conclude well before the summer conventions. The nominee will win on the first ballot. And two, that political operators like Robert Strauss, the former Democratic national chairman, will be the brokers. Not a chance. What matters is delegates. They are the only bargaining chips, and Strauss won't have a single one. Hart, if he has any, won't have enough.

Jackson will have plenty, as many as 700 to 800. He will have the balance of power. There is sure to be pressure on the two leading white candidates, presumably Dukakis and Gephardt, to forge a ticket. But neither will be eager to settle for the vice presidency after campaigning so hard and so long for the presidential nomination. Why not check with Jesse Jackson first and see what he's offering?

Negotiating with Jackson won't be easy, particularly if the old Jesse resurfaces. The old Jesse was radical, aggressive, and brimming with demands. White voters were scared away. The new Jesse is friendly and far less radical, and he got roughly 20 percent of the white Democratic vote in Minnesota, ten percent in Iowa and New Hampshire. Conventional wisdom among Democrats is that Jackson has matured to the point that the new Jesse is the real Jesse. "He's become a very pragmatic politician," says Mark Siegel, a Democratic consultant. Jackson's overriding interest is doing what's best for his minority and working-class constituency, argues Ann Lewis, a Jackson adviser. He's "absolutely committed" to a Democratic victory in 1988, she says, and wouldn't do anything to jeopardize that.

We shall see. There's a lot of wishful thinking in the view that Jesse has mellowed. He's had a free ride in the campaign. The misinformation and nutty ideas in his stump speech haven't been challenged, nor has his chumminess with Yasir Arafat, Fidel Castro, and the Sandinistas. If Jackson has a big day on Super Tuesday—300 to 400 delegates, say, out of 1,303—and increasingly attracts white support, his rivals will have to attack. Only Gore has done it so far, and all he's said is that Jackson has no government experience. Criticizing Jackson might help one of the white candidates in the primaries. But it would also antagonize Jackson and force him to defend his more extreme views. The old Jesse would be back, and making a deal with him would be all the more difficult and risky.

What's his price? He doesn't have "a blueprint in his desk," says Lewis. "I haven't had one conversation with him on that subject," says Gerald Austin, Jackson's campaign manager. But Jackson hasn't ruled out the vice presidency. On the contrary, he's said he'd consider it. So what if he demanded it? He could make a strong case for himself as a seasoned political figure (twice a national candidate) and representative of the most loyal Democratic bloc, blacks. The problem is the Democratic ticket would lose with Jackson on it, though explaining that to Jackson wouldn't be much fun. Austin says it won't happen anyway. "My gut feeling is nobody would invite him to be vice president and he wouldn't accept. I can't see Jesse Jackson being second fiddle in a one-man band."

Still, Jackson needs something tangible to show for his campaign, something proving he's won respect. Otherwise, black leaders will abandon him, says Republican strategist John Sears. Jackson knows that language in the platform on his issues—"economic violence," drugs, the homeless—is meaningless. At the least, he'd ask for veto power over the vice presidential nominee, and get it. This would allow him to rule out a moderate-to-conservative running mate. He's also bound to push for influence over

Cabinet and sub-Cabinet appointments. For himself, "he's going to play harder ball this time in terms of making the Democrats come out and say he's been a good force for the party," says Linda Williams of the Joint Center for Political Studies, a think tank specializing in black politics.

IF WORDS of praise are requested, Robertson will get volumes of them from Dole. Dole can't get the nomination without Robertson, and he knows it. Bush assumes he won't need Robertson. And he'd better be right because if he finds himself short, he'll have trouble getting any of Robertson's delegates. The Bush campaign has foolishly alienated the Robertson people, particularly Robertson himself. "He dislikes Bush intensely," says New Right leader Paul Weyrich, who talks to Robertson regularly. Beating Robertson in primaries and caucuses is part of the game, but Bush aides have sneered at Pat's supporters and their religion. That's harder to forgive. After Bush won in Michigan, his aides joked that Robertson would dispatch a hurricane to the state. Neil Bush, the vice president's son, referred to Robertson's backers as "cockroaches." When Robertson protested, he said he meant "worker bees."

Dole has fallen all over himself to cultivate Robertson, and it has worked. After Robertson won a straw poll in Iowa last fall, Dole praised him for bringing new people into the party. He's repeated that in televised debates, and Robertson loves it. In the week before the New Hampshire primary in February, Robertson and Dole stayed at the same hotel. They chatted several times, particularly about their dislike of the Bush campaign. On the day after the primary, they met by chance in the lobby. Robertson brought up a debate scheduled in Dallas a few days later and complained that Bush aides controlled most of the tickets for the audience. Dole nodded. "I'm not inclined to go unless they straighten it out," he said. "Neither am I," said Robertson. "Great," said Dole. "Let's not go." And they didn't.

That was the only substantive discussion between Dole and Robertson, but their aides have been in contact for months. Donald Devine, a Dole consultant, talks regularly with Marc Nuttle, Robertson's campaign manager. Nuttle says it's not so much Bush as his aides who are disliked. "We've been treated shabbily by them at the state level," he says. "Bush hasn't done anything to stop that. When Bob Dole's had an opportunity, he's stood up for us. George hasn't." In state after state, "Whenever we tried to play by the rules and it didn't work for them [the Bush forces], they changed the rules," says Nuttle. Whether Nuttle's complaints are legitimate doesn't matter. The point is there's bad blood between Robertson and Bush.

What is Robertson's price? He and his aides haven't discussed this because they're convinced Robertson is going to win the nomination. Robertson, after all, believes that God has called him to the presidency.

Nuttle says there's "no plan B" in the Robertson strategy. "It's never come up on our agenda." It will. Weyrich says that Robertson has told him several times that he isn't interested in being vice president. But he'd want some say-so on who's picked. William Brock, Dole's campaign manager,

says, "What you can't do is promise something you can't deliver or would cost you the election." He puts Robertson as vice presidential running mate in the second category. Robertson himself is a big fan of Interior Secretary Donald Hodel, a conservative and a devout Christian. He's said he'd want someone "like Hodel" as his White House chief of staff, but he might urge Dole to take Hodel as veep. He's also mentioned businessman Peter Grace as a possible budget director and billionaire Ross Perot as defense secretary. And he likes Jeane Kirkpatrick "a lot," says Weyrich.

Robertson is passionate on three issues—Planned Parenthood, "cleaning out" the State Department, and anti-communist "freedom fighters." He certainly would demand a secretary of health and human services who is anti-abortion and committed to cutting off federal funds for Planned Parenthood. At State, he'd like to diminish the role of career bureaucrats and install an all-conservative slate of appointees. He favors aid to anti-communist guerrillas anywhere in the world. On economics, he's an old-fashioned conservative, not a supply-sider. He refused to sign a pledge not to raise taxes. The only other GOP candidate to refuse to sign is Dole. The platform? It was conservative enough for Robertson in 1984 and will be again, without his asking.

Even if the kingmaker doesn't demand much, the process is tricky for both king and maker. The hard part is keeping a deal secret. "The nomination that is the product of a public deal with Jesse Jackson isn't worth much," says Siegel. The same is true for a deal with Robertson. But how else, aside from public declaration, can Jackson and Robertson be assured that promises will be kept? If nobody knows about the arrangement, they'd have to rely solely on the candidate's word. In the end, Jackson and Robertson will settle for that, figuring it's better to be a kingmaker for a promise and a prayer than not to be a kingmaker at all.

FRED BARNES

CAMPAIGN '88

IMMORAL ROBERTSON

TENS OF MILLIONS of Americans are sincerely concerned about moral decline in American society, including the incidence of AIDS, abortion, teenage pregnancy, and drug abuse; the spread of violent and sexually explicit videos, movies, records, and magazines; and the tendency of the media and national leaders to extol material wealth and ignore values. Clearly there's an opening for more than one 1988 presidential candidate to address moral issues. But Democrats (Jesse Jackson sometimes excepted) and most Republicans tend to concentrate on material questions, leaving the field to Pat Robertson.

Is Robertson a worthy shepherd for the morality flock?

He is certainly the hardest-line of all the candidates on the issues, but his record strongly suggests that he is anything but a moral paragon when it comes to politics. Investigations by two journalists indicate that he used tax-exempt church contributions to launch his presidential campaign. He has made wild, unsubstantiated charges against one opponent, George Bush, in public. Another opponent, Jack Kemp, charges that Robertson supporters have waged a scurrilous whisper-and-Xerox campaign against Kemp in private. He has doctored his own record, has alleged that referring to his religious background constitutes "bigotry," and has dealt with prior claims of faith healing and the ability to stop hurricanes by simply dismissing them.

TWO CONTROVERSIES have been subjects of official inquiry. The Internal Revenue Service is investigating whether money contributed to Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network was diverted to political uses. Articles by syndicated religion columnist Michael McManus and Norfolk, Virginia, newspaper reporter April Witt (confirmed to me by some of their sources) indicate that as much as \$8.5 million was diverted. Meanwhile, Robertson suddenly has moved to drop the libel suit against former Representative Pete McCloskey and Representative Andy Jacobs, who alleged that in 1951 Robertson got his father, a senator, to pull strings to keep him out of combat in Korea. Court documents make a strong circumstantial case that Robertson wanted and expected his father to intercede for him, and that Senator Willis Robertson did contact the Marine Corps about his son's assignment. Robertson was indeed pulled from a complement of troops headed for combat and did not face enemy fire.

Robertson is not admitting the truth of McCloskey's charges, just claiming that it would be inconvenient to spend time in court right now. But he once said, "If I am elected president, how could I as commander in chief ever order a young American into combat if the record is not absolutely clear that I never shirked military duty?" Now he wants to leave the record unclear. Robertson formerly accused McCloskey, a fellow Marine lieutenant who did go into combat, of being a "pathological liar" for claiming in a letter to Jacobs—subsequently released to the press—that "my single distinct memory is of Pat, with a big grin on his face, standing on the dock at Kobe [Japan] . . . saying something like, 'So long, you guys—good luck,' and telling us that his father had got him out of combat duty." Robertson's father was chairman of the Senate military appropriations subcommittee.

Under oath McCloskey's memory has proved less distinct. In a deposition he acknowledged that neither he nor anyone he knows ever heard Robertson say, "My father got me off the ship" that was heading for Korea. However, McCloskey's lawyer has found a former bunkmate of Robertson's at Quantico, Dwight E. Roberts, who says that Robertson "made it quite clear to us that his father had clout to keep him out, get him out of the Marine Corps or keep him out of combat." Roberts added that Robertson made such remarks "quite frequently . . . not

only to me but to anybody within earshot."

Letters written home by Robertson's shipmates also indicate their strong belief that he was reassigned to a retraining company in Japan as a result of political pull. A February 7, 1951, letter from Senator Robertson to Francis Gaines, president of Washington and Lee University in Virginia and father of another Marine who was reassigned, says that "I received a letter from General [Lemuel] Shepherd [Pacific Marine commander] stating that Pat and Edwin were going to an interesting part of Japan where they would be given some valuable training before proceeding to Korea." Two days later Gaines wrote Senator Robertson that he "shall always be grateful for *everything* you have done" (his emphasis).

Another letter from Robertson's father to a friend in England dated five days later said that "I think Pat and a few others in his category will be dropped off in Korea for further training and naturally Gladys [Robertson's mother] and I hope that before that is completed the issue in Korea will either have been settled or the united line [sic] so stabilized that there will be no excessive casualties in the Marine retreat from the reservoir area." Robertson spent five months in Japan, when some of the bloodiest fighting of the Korean War was taking place. He was assigned to Korea after another officer complained to General Shepherd. Court documents indicate that Robertson got drunk and beat angrily on the door of the complaining officer.

Although Robertson has asserted in biographical statements that he served in combat, he actually was a headquarters administrative officer in Korea. He also was a courier ferrying documents to Japan—duty that earned him the unofficial label "liquor officer" (because booze was allegedly brought back on the return trip), a tag McCloskey repeated and which Robertson also challenged in the libel suit.

The campaign finance case against Robertson is likewise strong. The law provides that money from tax-exempt entities such as the Christian Broadcasting Network can't be used to promote a political candidacy. CBN tax records obtained by columnist McManus show that during 1984 and 1985, CBN gave or lent (without repayment) \$8.5 million to the Freedom Council, officially an educational entity but actually an organizing vehicle for Robertson's presidential campaign. McManus has quoted former Freedom Council officials—who confirmed their accounts to me—that the organization's main activities were to train delegates for precinct caucuses in Michigan, to organize religious activists in other early 1988 states such as Iowa, South Carolina, and Florida, and to hold "non-partisan" rallies at which Robertson was the only speaker.

Gregory Jackson, former executive director of the Freedom Council, told McManus that it was "routine" for some attendees at Freedom Council rallies to be coached to ask Robertson, "Are you going to run for president," at which point he would routinely ask, "You tell me. Should I?" which invariably elicited a roar of approval. When Robertson moved toward a declaration of candidacy, he officially separated himself from the Freedom Council, Jackson said, but really called all its important shots. In

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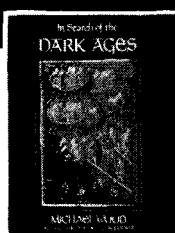
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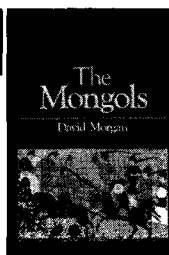
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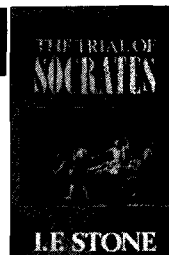
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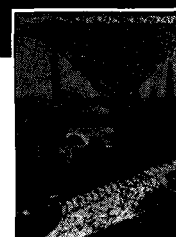
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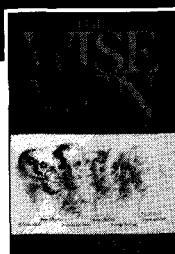
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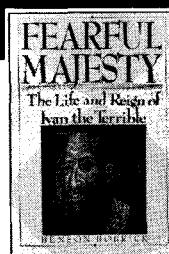
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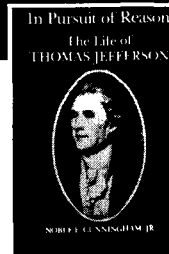
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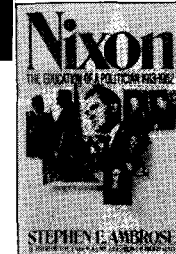
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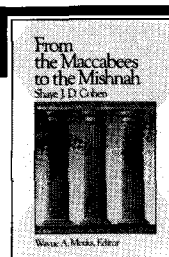
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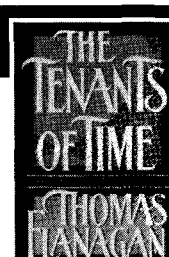
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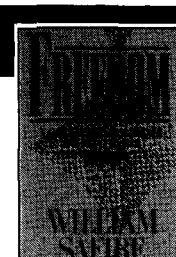
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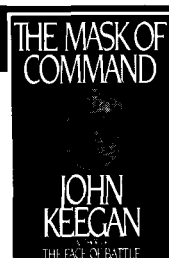
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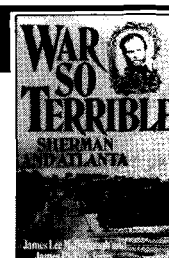
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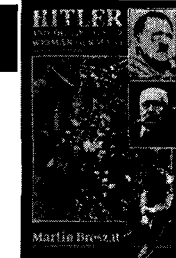
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September 1986, when the IRS moved to investigate the council's tax-exempt status, Robertson personally ordered the organization closed down, Jackson said. The IRS is still probing CBN's exempt status. Witt has reported in the Norfolk *Virginian-Pilot* that in 1986 CBN donated \$213,000 to financially troubled farmers in Iowa, ten times more than it gave to farmers in any other state.

Witt also has documented some of Robertson's major attempts to rewrite his biography, including his pre-campaign claims to have healed people of multiple sclerosis, goiters, and cancer and his flat denial on the Phil Donahue show in 1986 that he had done any such thing. New official campaign biographies of Robertson fail to mention that he ever was an ordained minister. A new edition of his autobiography omits mention of his one-time assertion that God directed him to stay out of politics. In January 1985 Robertson said on CBN that "Christians and Jewish people are the only ones qualified" to govern America. His co-host, Ben Kinchlow, interceded to say, "Obviously you're not saying that there are no other people qualified to be in government if they aren't Christians and Jews." Robertson answered: "Yeah, I'm saying that. I just said it." Asked about that lately, Witt reported, Robertson claims he cannot remember having said it. He said it, all right. It's on videotape.

As a candidate, Robertson has claimed to respect the principle of separation of church and state. But as Witt documents, before he became a candidate he called that a "Soviet concept." Now he dismisses the idea of an imminent Armageddon, but Witt obtained a tape recording of a 1980 seminar in which Robertson said, "If my figures are correct, superimposed on a world of 4.5 billion people, it is entirely possible that 2.5 billion may die during some of the transition period into the new order" in which he said "those of us who are Christians are going to govern." He stated, "We're on the edge of the breakup of the world order as we know it. We're on the edge of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ." Robertson labels any attempt by a reporter or an opponent to make a campaign issue of his beliefs as "unbelievable religious bigotry."

Robertson has accused the George Bush campaign of "sleazy tactics," notably of arranging exposure of sexual misconduct by Robertson's fellow evangelist Jimmy Swaggart in order to hurt Robertson. But according to a former Robertson aide, Robertson once assigned his own security director, Patrick Caldwell, to assemble "a file" on Swaggart's financial misdealings before a 1986 meeting at which Robertson convinced Swaggart to reverse himself and endorse his candidacy. The aide says in the end Robertson didn't show the file to Swaggart.

Meanwhile the Jack Kemp campaign is convinced that Robertson supporters are responsible for distributing material alleging that Kemp is "soft on pornography" and that Kemp's "own family was involved in abortion." One Kemp supporter and former Robertson aide, Dick Minard, claims he saw Robertson supporters distributing such material during a Kemp rally at the University of South Carolina last month. A misrepresentation of Kemp's voting

record has been traced by Basil Talbott of the *Chicago Sun-Times* to Robertson's Illinois campaign director, Dan Scalf. Robertson's deputy press secretary, Kerry Moody, charges that Kemp's own supporters were planting stories about dirty tricks against Kemp in order to defame Robertson.

Moody himself was the source of one documented claim of mudslinging by the Robertson campaign. In January 1987, according to the Rev. Steve Newton of Des Moines, Moody told a gathering of evangelical ministers in Iowa that "Jack Kemp is an adulterer and a womanizer, just like John Kennedy." Moody supposedly said that "the George Bush campaign has all the dirt on him" and claimed that *Newsweek* was about to publish the evidence. Moody confirms Newton's story, saying he was asked a question about Kemp and "I repeated the Washington gossip. I did say, 'If you liked the John Kennedy White House, you'll like the Jack Kemp White House.'"

One lesser Robertson campaign trick also is documented—a claim in an ad that the *Wall Street Journal* had asserted that Pat Robertson's economic proposals were excellent while Kemp's would wreck the country. In fact, this assessment was made by an economic think tank of little reputation and was cited in the *Journal* as evidence of the think tank's eccentricity.

The dismal record suggests that Robertson is a religious zealot who thinks he has been chosen by God for his mission, that anyone who stands in his way is immoral, and that any inconvenient fact may be simply dismissed. By any traditional standard, this is a record not of moral discipline and self-denial, but of massive assertion of unbound ego. America needs a political leader who will embody a sense of true morality, call the country to higher standards, and take constructive action to combat evils such as AIDS and runaway licentiousness—and also poverty and homelessness. Pat Robertson, who claims to be the morality candidate of 1988, is actually a phony prophet.

MORTON M. KONDRACKE

The only genuine liberal populist.

WHY I BACK JACKSON

NO CANDIDATE has been so rudely handled by the press as Jesse Jackson. When he emerged as the Democratic front-runner in the polls, the news analysts started sneering at the "seven dwarfs" and whistling for New York Governor Mario Cuomo. When he isn't being whited out of the campaign news, he's being interrogated for secret motives. "The Power or the Glory?" agonized Gail Sheehy in her *Vanity Fair* psycho-profile of the candidate, as if the presidency weren't even an option. Even *Mother Jones* ran its Jackson cover story under the headline "What Does He Really Want?" At least in Gary Hart's case, ev-

everyone acknowledged that whatever else he might have wanted along the way, he hasn't been just pretending to run for the presidency.

When it comes to the issues, the press is fond of saying that only Richard Gephardt has found a theme, namely protectionism and Asia-bashing. Hardly anyone, outside of the *Village Voice*, is picking up on Jackson's far more challenging view of our economic problems. Instead of scapegoating our foreign competitors, he argues, we should be calling American corporations to account for exporting jobs to the Third World and squandering their resources on mergers and speculation. Nor has there been a serious response to Jackson's far-reaching domestic proposals—for a comprehensive national health program, for subsidized child care, for a federal jobs program—other than to file them dismissively under “traditional liberalism.”

When he isn't being psychoanalyzed or simply ignored, Jackson is being taken to task for getting off so lightly. As an editorial in this magazine put it last October:

What if Jesse Jackson were white? The truth is he'd be a laughingstock. As it is, he's gotten a free ride and a simulacrum of respect. That is due to a residual, patronizing racism that refuses to hold a black candidate to even the abysmally low standards to which we hold white candidates.

None of this, of course, throws a very flattering light on those of us who actually support Jackson. Either we're black nationalists, possibly of the noxious Farrakhan variety, or white racists—an interesting recipe for a Rainbow Coalition! Or else we're dupes of one of his secret agendas: to be a big player in Atlanta; to walk away from the convention and create a black-dominated third party; or to be nice in Atlanta and win a portfolio with a ticket to the Third World. Hardly any of the media's Jackson-watchers seem to have considered the possibility that Jackson is running for the presidency because he wants to be president, and that his supporters are supporting him because we are convinced that he is the best man for the job.

BUT LET ME introduce a few of his supporters just so I don't feel so lonely here in the pages of TNR. Several weeks ago I spent a couple of days in New Hampshire doing house parties and giving talks for Jackson. I don't know what I expected to find. Maybe some scraggly subsistence farmers from the days of the great left trek into the countryside. Maybe a few upper-crust ladies of the limousine-liberal persuasion. Maybe a black person, if there happened to be one in the state at the time.

Except for the black person—a West Hartford, Connecticut, factory worker who had come up to canvass because “the condition of the working man has gotten sickening”—none of my expectations of the New Hampshire Jackson forces were remotely confirmed. There was a house party full of pink-collar women who looked like Wallace supporters circa 1968, except they were throwing around words like “movement” and “struggle.” There was a young Hispanic volunteer, an assistant manager at a fast-

food place, who said he was for Jackson “because I appreciate his stand on gay rights.” There was a gaggle of college students—carpetbaggers from Oberlin and locals from the state college—who had dark circles under their eyes and talked about peace. There was an elderly woman who surprised everyone by writing out a check for \$100. “This time, I think we really have a chance,” she said to me, confident I would know who “we” are.

I KNEW, of course, what I liked about Jackson before I ever thought of going to New Hampshire. He is simply the most liberal candidate in the running, the only one committed to reversing the hemorrhage of public funds to the military and the upward flow of wealth to the already-rich. What I found out from meeting his grass-roots supporters is that he also is a genuine populist, capable of stirring the “Middle Americans” that the far right laid claim to 20 years ago. You'll find a lot of coffee and frosted doughnuts on the Jackson circuit, but no crudités or granola, and not a bite of brie. The same is true closer to home, in New York City, where Jackson has won the backing of most of the unions, including such bastions of white working-class power as the Teamsters and the Building Trades. In the pale part of the Rainbow spectrum, Jesse Jackson is a working-class hero.

This is what I think distresses the media most about him: not that he is black (though that may be distressing enough), but that he is the first political leader since the heyday of agrarian populism to reach out successfully to black and white Americans with a message that is both politically liberal and class militant. And this may be the historical significance of his campaign. Not only is he one of the first black people (Shirley Chisholm was the very first) to try to break into the 200-year-old white male dynasty that is the presidency, but he has shown the way to a revival of liberal, in fact, left-liberal, populism.

Exactly two decades ago the right appropriated the language of populism and the politics of class. George Wallace—who was, in some ways, an eerie negative of Jackson—showed the way, and pretty soon millionaire Republicans such as Spiro Agnew were speaking up for the common folk and against the “liberal elite.” Then came the New Right, with a class analysis filched from Kevin Phillips and (by way of the intellectually addled stream of neoconservatism) Karl Marx. They claimed the working class and “Middle America” in general for their own and chose the “new class” (roughly the educated middle class, or Agnew's “liberal elite”) as the class enemy. Probably the only people taken in by the right's sociopolitical sleight of hand were the new-class liberals themselves, who came to believe that the white majority was a bunch of hard hats and rednecks who could only be appealed to by lackluster neoliberals with no constituency (“special interests”) at all.

In part because of its spurious populism, among other temporary advantages, the far right came to power, and proceeded to grind the “common folk” under its heel.

Social programs that helped to keep the low-paid bottom of the working class afloat were decimated. The National Labor Relations Board was exsanguinated, leaving the employing class free for the worst wave of union busting and wage cutting since the 1920s. The real elite, which has never been liberal, was pampered with tax cuts and encouraged to gorge itself in the speculative binge that culminated in Black Monday. "Middle Americans" saw their incomes stagnate, even with two adults per family out hustling in the labor force. And for the first time since the 1940s, the median family income wasn't enough to purchase a middle-class lifestyle.

SOMEONE WAS bound to notice the "opening"—as it was cautiously described—created for the left by the right's betrayal of its own putative constituency. In 1985 Richard Reeves, who is by no means a hothead, was prescribing "a little class warfare—called 'Populism,' of course" for the Democrats. Many on the left-liberal side of the political spectrum would have preferred that the person who reclaimed populism for them be someone quite different from Jesse Jackson: someone less identified with black capitalism, if not someone more electably white. Certainly if I could have designed a populist leader for '88 he or she would have been more deeply feminist than Jesse Jackson, less puritanical in his social message, less likely to confuse "Jews" with Israel. And I definitely would not have made him a Baptist minister.

But it was Jesse Jackson—not Pat Schroeder or Mario Cuomo or any number of other possibilities—who leaped into the "opening." From 1984 on, he courted "the dispossessed" of all colors with an energy and passion that no other political figure could even begin to simulate. He rallied farmers facing foreclosure. He stayed overnight in tenement apartments with the poor. He picketed with the striking meat packers in Austin, Minnesota, even after they had been abandoned by their parent union. He joined white strikers—in Jay, Main, and Cudahy, Wisconsin—who were facing black scabs, and preached class solidarity to both. He was the only one of the Democratic candidates to address the April 1987 march on Washington against intervention in Central America or the October march for gay rights. He likes to be with people at what he calls "the point of challenge"—the moment of crisis and confrontation—and, somehow, he usually manages to get there.

Perhaps most important, he has revived the lost language of genuine populism. The one time I heard him speak in person he was detached, analytical, skipping deftly from issues like acid rain to pay equity and deficits. He can do that. But most of the time, in his basic stump speech, he sounds like an a cappella Woody Guthrie rallying the underdogs, the salt of the earth:

Workers, it's time for a change. . . . Together we can win. Workers united can never be defeated. . . . I know it's been tough, but don't give up. Above all, keep your dignity, keep your self-respect. Hold your head high, stick your chest out. Be proud. You built America. You built the world. This land is your land.

Demagoguery? Well, maybe. But it's old-fashioned, left-wing demagoguery, and we haven't heard that kind of talk around here for a long time.

By now, Jackson's populism has infected the other candidates. Gephardt, the post-neoliberal and former "moderate," has been campaigning in a windbreaker against "greed" and "the establishment." Joe Biden-like, he has taken to borrowing Jackson's rhyming analysis of how the corporations like to "merge" with each other and "purge" the workers. Mild-mannered Dukakis is running blood-and-gore TV spots on Central America. Even the Republicans are talking about "compassion," much as if Sean Penn were to take up humility. Senator Albert Gore has just announced what the *New York Times* calls a "strategic shift" redirecting his campaign to the "average working men and women." But the Jacksonward drift of the campaign should not become an excuse for liberals to embrace the most "electable" Jackson surrogate. He created the new left-liberal populism and, as much as the others try to cut in on it, he is still the best man for the job.

TRUE, Jackson has never held public office, but that should make us all the more appreciative of what he has accomplished without the power of government behind him. As America's foremost contemporary civil rights leader, he has long experience in pushing for change from outside the centers of power, peacefully and by persuasion. As a kind of free-lance diplomat, he has met with heads of state in Central America, the Middle East, Southern Africa, Japan, and Korea. These encounters, described by critics as mere photo opportunities, have been far more productive than the average congressional junket. When he met with Fidel Castro, he talked him into going along with the Contadora peace process and releasing 48 Americans from Cuban jails. When he met with Syria's Hafez Assad he got him to release the hostage Lt. Robert Goodman. He even managed an impromptu confrontation with Gorbachev about the plight of Soviet Jews. And he did all this without the might of America's missiles behind him, without even throwing in a few TOWs to sweeten the deal.

He is also the candidate who knows ordinary Americans best, who is least insulated by big-time donors, image-handlers, and other flunkies or, of course, Bush-style talking limousines. Remember, ordinary Americans have family incomes of about \$30,000 a year (compared, for example, with the readers of this magazine, who, according to a publisher's memo to advertisers, have "an average income [of] \$83,190 and 10 percent are millionaires!"). Jesse Jackson would bring with him to the presidency a perspective that has been absent from that office for a long time now—that of the nurse's aide making just above the minimum wage, the blue-collar worker fighting to hold on to a union wage, the small-business person struggling to stay in the black.

"But can he sit still?" an undecided Democrat asked me recently, perhaps alarmed by Gail Sheehy's judgment that "Jackson in the Oval Office would be a caged bird." Well,

maybe he can't, but would that be such a bad thing? We have had, for nearly eight years now, a president who sat so still that no one could tell whether he was napping, and who went out to the people only in the form of a vague holographic image, hovering just out of hearing range. No wonder so many of the candidates are boasting of their ability to "manage," and are promising to don a green eyeshade and spend their time going over the budget with a sharpened pencil.

But a president must also *lead*, and leading, it is often forgotten, is largely a matter of listening: getting out of the office and into the streets, the factories, the malls, the farmlands. Bringing adversaries together and making them

listen to each other. Above all, being able to hear those voices that are not amplified by wealth or corporate power, and being able to translate their hopes into a vision for change, their grievances into a program for action. Jesse Jackson can do that. And if, just for a few months, we could refrain from the self-fulfilling prophecy that a black man can't win in America, then I believe that he will get his chance to do it.

BARBARA EHRENREICH

Barbara Ehrenreich is co-chair of Democratic Socialists of America.

The Tawana Brawley case.

THE MYSTERY OF WAPPINGERS FALLS

BY WILLIAM TUCKER

DEMONS ARE definitely abroad in sleepy Dutchess County, New York. Generally known as the home of Vassar College and FDR's Hyde Park, the icebound Hudson River community has become the scene of an explosive racial melodrama.

Last November 24 Tawana Brawley (now 16) decided not to go to school. A good student always loaded with an armful of books, Brawley nevertheless decided—apparently on impulse—to take a 35-mile trip across the Hudson River to visit her boyfriend, Todd Buxton, in the Orange County Jail. He was serving a six-month sentence for a non-fatal shooting in his hometown of Newburgh. Hitching a ride with a friend, Tawana made the 13-mile trip to Newburgh, where she met Buxton's mother, Geneva. They took a bus 20 miles to Goshen. After returning to Newburgh in the afternoon, Tawana caught the last bus back to Wappingers Falls. The bus driver—who knew her stepfather—remembers dropping her off on heavily traveled Route 9 about a mile and a quarter from her house around 8:45 p.m.

Then she disappeared. Four days later, on Saturday, November 28, a former neighbor looked out his window at the Pavillion condominiums—about a mile and a quarter in the other direction from the bus stop—and saw a disheveled girl crawling into a plastic garbage bag. He recognized Brawley, whose family had been evicted from the next-door apartment for non-payment of rent only two weeks before.

Brawley's pants had been singed through on the inner

thighs, although her body was not burned. (Thus, according to some newspaper reports, she was "half-naked.") Across her stomach and chest, "KKK," "nigger," and other racial slurs were scrawled in magic marker. Her hair had been chopped short and her face was smeared with excrement. Sheriff's deputies quickly took her to St. Francis Hospital in Poughkeepsie. There, Brawley was unable to talk. When a black policeman asked her, "Who did this to you?" she scrawled on a piece of paper, "White cop."

After physically examining her, a female doctor determined that she had not been raped. A "rape kit" exam (involving laboratory analysis of vaginal smears) later confirmed this. Some fluid found on her clothing, thought to be sperm, later proved negative. Although obviously upset, Tawana showed no signs of physical abuse or outdoor exposure. She was cleaned up and released from the hospital within a few hours.

After another fruitless interview with Dutchess County sheriff's deputies on Sunday, the district attorney asked for a Monday interview with rape and juvenile officers. Before the meeting could occur, however, the story was on the "CBS Evening News." In a Sunday night broadcast, Brawley's mother, Glenda, her aunt, Juanita, and her common-law stepfather, Ralph King, presented highly detailed accounts of what had happened.

Tawana had been approached, they said, after getting off the bus by a man wearing "a shiny uniform coat and a shoulder holster." He tried to pull her into a green car driven by another white man. When Brawley cried out for the police, the man said, "I am the police," and hit her over the head. When Tawana regained consciousness, she

William Tucker, a New York writer, is working on a book about homelessness.

found herself in a "remote, wooded area," surrounded by six white men. They held her captive for four days and nights, intermittently forcing her to perform oral sex. Glenda Brawley charged that the crime had been committed by "Dutchess County law enforcement officers who have been infiltrated by the Ku Klux Klan."

On Monday Tawana met with a female assistant district attorney, a black assistant district attorney, a juvenile counselor, and the president of the Newburgh NAACP. Once again she was barely able to communicate, responding to questions only with vague nods of her head.

THAT WAS the last time law enforcement officials talked with Tawana Brawley. On Tuesday New York attorneys Vernon Mason and Alton Maddox Jr. arrived on the scene. Mason and Maddox have made a public career for themselves by following one simple strategy. Whenever a black is victimized by a white, or by the police, they rush to the scene and persuade the victim not to testify. Then they charge that the crime is being "covered up" by a "racist" justice system. This simple strategy of obstructing justice may seem transparently dishonest, but it has been highly effective. To date, Mason and Maddox have used it to extract major concessions from public officials.

At Howard Beach, for example, where white teenage toughs beat and chased two black men until one was run over by a car and killed, Maddox and Mason blocked murder indictments by refusing to allow the surviving victim, Cedric Sandiford, to testify. Sandiford's refusal to cooperate forced Queens District Attorney John Santucci to settle for manslaughter indictments, and there was a huge public outcry. As a result, Governor Mario Cuomo was forced to appoint a special prosecutor, Charles Hynes, to the case.

With Brawley too they immediately cut off any further contact between her and the police and simultaneously charged that Dutchess County officials were "covering up the crime." Once again they demanded that Cuomo appoint a special prosecutor to the case.

Meanwhile, Dutchess County District Attorney William Grady convened a grand jury and began summoning witnesses. After interviewing over 200 people, however, he said the investigation would not be able to proceed any further without testimony from Tawana. When Maddox and Mason refused, Grady issued a subpoena—an order that Maddox and Mason said would be ignored.

Then the investigation hit another snag, which took District Attorney Grady off the case. Four days after Brawley was discovered, Harry Crist Jr., a 28-year-old part-time police officer in neighboring Fishkill, put a gun to his head and shot himself. Crist's family said he had been in despair over losing his girlfriend and flunking a test to become a state trooper. But Crist also resembled Tawana's description of the policeman who abducted her—"a blond man with a mustache"—and so his suicide made him a suspect. It turned out, though, that one of Crist's close friends—and a possible alibi witness—was Assistant District Attorney Steven Pagones. Grady tried to work around the conflict

but decided—in order to avoid any "appearance of impropriety"—that a special prosecutor should be appointed.

On January 20 Dutchess County Judge Judith Hillery (a tough law-and-order judge) accepted Grady's withdrawal and appointed David Sall and William Burke, two Poughkeepsie criminal attorneys, as special prosecutors. Maddox immediately complained that both were "too white." When Sall and Burke learned why they had been appointed—because of the possible involvement of Assistant District Attorney Pagones—both begged off the case, arguing that the necessity of going through the district attorney's files would disqualify them from many future criminal cases in Dutchess County. "Probably no local attorney can avoid this conflict," they told the press.

Unfortunately, none of these details was made public. (The *Poughkeepsie Journal* only dug it all out in mid-February.) Instead, people were left with the impression that the suspects in the case must be so high up in Dutchess County law enforcement that no one dared touch them. Maddox and Mason were ecstatic. "Everyone in Dutchess County knows who did it," they told the press, "but no one dares arrest them."

AND SO Governor Cuomo was forced to appoint a special prosecutor. He chose State Attorney General Robert Abrams, a staunch liberal with a background in consumer affairs. Once again Maddox and Mason criticized the selection, saying they wanted Charles Hynes, who had successfully prosecuted the Howard Beach case. (Maddox had originally opposed Hynes at Howard Beach, but apparently changed his mind.) Cuomo told Maddox and Mason to stop trying to pick their own prosecutors.

By mid-January Abrams arrived in Poughkeepsie, setting up shop with 12 staff members in a state armory. A 24-hour-a-day "Tawana Brawley hotline" was established, asking the public for tips. Bill Cosby and *Essence* magazine threw in a \$25,000 reward. Maddox and Mason urged people to call Abrams's hotline with information—even while claiming to know themselves the identity of the abductors and refusing to cooperate with Abrams.

Abrams, for his part, began begging for Tawana's cooperation. He sent the family registered letters, camped outside their doorstep, and generally acted like a moonstruck courtier. Maddox and Mason dismissed all these overtures, saying they would have nothing to do with Abrams.

Finally, Cuomo intervened, meeting with Maddox, Mason, and the Rev. Al Sharpton, a free-lance Brooklyn hustler/activist who has organized minor demonstrations and was recently revealed as having reported on boxing promoter Don King for the FBI. On February 10 an agreement was hammered out in which Maddox, Mason, and Sharpton would accept Abrams and allow Tawana to testify.

A week later the agreement fell apart. After only one meeting, Maddox and Mason—obviously enjoying tweaking the government's nose—announced the deal was off. Abrams told reporters the problem hinged on Maddox's and Mason's insistence that he "make both opening and closing statements and cross-examine wit-

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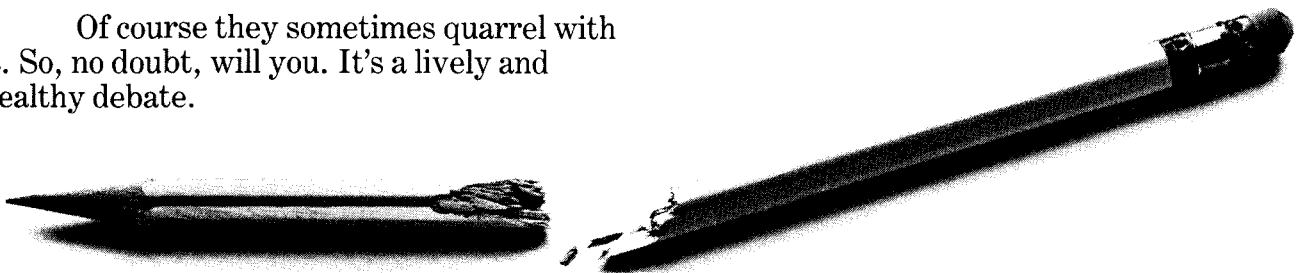
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nesses" during whatever trial might eventually occur.

Abrams, as it happens, has never tried a criminal case. His assistant, John Ryan, on the other hand, is generally regarded as one of the most able prosecutors in the state. Nevertheless, Maddox and Mason insisted on Abrams. When Abrams revealed the conflict, they accused him of "betraying their confidence" and announced that he too was part of the "cover-up"—which now seemed to include everyone between New York City and Albany.

When I visited Poughkeepsie in mid-February, the whole county was crawling with reporters, and a sense of hysteria prevailed. Within a few short days, a 13-year-old boy offered the first corroborating evidence of the abduction when he told a *Poughkeepsie Journal* reporter he'd seen Tawana thrown from a car the night before she was found. When police questioned the boy, he said he had made the whole thing up. Then a 33-year-old black therapist at the Hudson River Psychiatric Center reported being kidnapped by two white men who tried to rape her. A quick investigation proved the story a hoax—she had spent most of the time drinking with friends. Next, Tawana's family revealed a new bit of evidence: a "mystery note," written by Tawana in December, in which she scrawled, "I want him dead. I want Scoralick"—apparently referring to Dutchess County Sheriff Frederick Scoralick.

And so I trudged off with the growing pack of reporters to hear Sheriff Scoralick (who is very tall, with black hair and no mustache) issue "no comment" to the new charge that he had abducted Tawana. Strangely enough—as someone noted—the TV newscaster conducting the interview had blond hair and a mustache and perfectly matched Tawana's description of her abductor.

WHAT ALMOST no one wants to confront—not Abrams, not Cuomo, and few of the reporters on the scene—is that there are some bizarre implausibilities in Tawana's story.

First, she claims to have been driven to a remote wooded area, where she was kept prisoner and sodomized for four days. *Four days!* Two of those days were working days and one was the Thanksgiving holiday. Nighttime temperatures dropped to the low 20s and there were intermittent showers. It rained one entire night.

How likely is it that a group of six men would stay out in the rain and cold for four days and nights solely for the purpose of molesting a teenage girl? And if they did, why weren't there missing-persons alarms out for them as well? Charles McCluskey, editor of the *Hudson Valley Hornet*, the only local paper that has challenged the story, points out: "If Tawana Brawley said she was abducted by one man, I would believe her. But to say that six men could disappear in a small rural community like this for four days and four nights without anybody taking note is absolutely ridiculous."

Moreover, there is the amazing coincidence that after abusing her for four days they chose to drop her off at the apartment building where she had lived until two weeks before. Did they choose the site at random? Or did they

think they were bringing her back from a date?

Dutchess County investigators checked the old apartment, which is still vacant. In the basement, they found traces of burnt clothing, hair clippings, and a denim jacket and pants partly smeared with feces. According to a report in the *New York Times*, several people reported seeing Tawana at the apartment complex on Thanksgiving Day.

Thus, there is a second, perfectly reasonable alternative hypothesis to the question "What happened to Tawana Brawley?" It goes like this. Brawley, for whatever reasons, ran away from home for a few days last November. She spent at least part of the time in the family's recently vacated apartment, to which she could easily have had a key. When it came time to go home, she made up a story.

Admittedly, it was quite a story. Why would anyone go to such an extreme in making excuses for a four-day absence? Yet, given the family situation, it may not be surprising. Ralph King, her stepfather, is on parole for killing his first wife with a .38 in 1970. The family has bounced from one apartment to another in recent years and has a record of domestic violence. Police have been summoned by neighbors many times to break up fights and quarrels—including one since the incident occurred. Geneva Buxton said Tawana was unhappy in the new apartment, and asked to move in with her.

Tawana has obviously suffered some kind of emotional breakdown. Although she is now reportedly back in school, visitors who talked with her in early February—heavyweight champion Mike Tyson, for example—say her speech was still slow and slurred months after the attack. As anyone with experience in such domestic matters knows, the truth is rarely very pretty—and often virtually impossible to determine.

EVERYONE I talked to in Dutchess County—black and white, notable and obscure—said the same thing: "I wish she'd just hurry up and testify. This case is getting on my nerves." The NAACP has tried to stake out a middle ground, praising Abrams and calling for Tawana to cooperate. (They were particularly miffed when Maddox referred to them as "The National Association for the Advancement of Coon People.") Yet Maddox, Mason, and Sharpton remained in their hallucinatory world. Sharpton recently compared Abrams with Hitler and charged that he was part of the cover-up because he owns a summer home in Dutchess County. When Cuomo suggested that Tawana be subpoenaed to testify, Mason called him "another Lester Maddox." Sharpton vowed that Tawana would go to jail before testifying, and in late February called on Cuomo to appoint Maddox as special prosecutor.

Unlike the Howard Beach case, where there was unanimous public outrage over the assault, it isn't even clear in this case exactly what kind of crime has been committed. At best, Tawana Brawley appears to be an unpredictable witness. Maddox, Mason, and Sharpton, on the other hand, are just playing racial politics. Given this combination, the truth is unlikely to emerge. But maybe that's what they all wanted anyway. □

ROLLING IN IT

BY RICHARD BLOW

THE DEMOCRATIC and Republican presidential candidates have at least one thing in common: their obsessive quest for money to finance their campaigns. But the Republicans have proved to be far better at the money game than the Democrats. The Democratic candidates have raised only about \$30 million. Republicans, thanks to their big-business constituency and some creative interpretation of campaign finance laws, already have some \$70 million. The figure will probably be \$100 million by the convention. In the early phase of the race, campaign money, or the lack of it, was the critical factor in the "winnowing-out" process. From Super Tuesday on it will become even more important.

The quest for funds begins long before a candidate makes his or her official announcement. Prospective candidates must first see if they can get the money for a race. "You have to have table stakes just to compete," says Rod Smith, the chief fund-raiser for Jack Kemp. "That means at least six to eight million." But there's another reason for unofficial fund-raising activity before a candidate has declared, especially for candidates like Bush who are already confident they can raise sufficient funds. Any official candidate who wants federal matching funds must adhere to Federal Election Commission guidelines for fund-raising practices and reporting. Candidates avoid these for as long as possible. Plus, official candidates are only allowed to spend about \$27 million on their pre-convention campaigns. But if they're not technically candidates, they can spend millions that won't count against the FEC's spending limits.

They do it by creating special pre-campaign PACs, which come in several varieties. One kind is supposed to be educational, promoting debate on issues and drawing citizens into politics. These PACs are tax-exempt, and IRS rules state that they may not work on behalf of political campaigns. They can accept contributions of up to \$5,000 from individuals and other PACs. In theory, they pay for non-partisan speeches, educational literature, and voter registration. In practice, they bankroll potential candidates, paying their way to states like Iowa and New Hampshire.

Jack Kemp, for example, established the Fund for the American Renaissance ostensibly to promote debate on economic issues. In June 1986, however, he resigned as the PAC chairman when it was reported that the PAC was paying the salaries of his top advisers, had a staff director

whose main job was to raise money for him, and had funded trips and TV documentaries that directly or indirectly promoted his (undeclared) candidacy.

Another kind of pre-campaign PAC is openly partisan. Its purpose is to "party-build," usually by giving money to Republicans running for Congress or by sponsoring campaign trips in support of a congressional candidate. These PACs too are forbidden from promoting the candidacy of their founders. Of course, that's the main reason they exist.

In May 1985 George Bush founded the Fund for America's Future. In 1986 it donated \$1.5 million (of \$9.35 million raised) to Republican candidates. But Bush wasn't acting out of love for the GOP. He was establishing political chits he's been calling in ever since. "I don't think there was ever the idea that we're going to give this guy a check for \$5,000 and he's going to come out for Bush," claims Fred Bush, the campaign's national deputy finance director (no relation to George Bush). But he admits that George Bush's presence at a fund-raiser, which can mean a six-figure boost for the host's campaign coffers, promotes a sense of gratitude.

The Fund for America's Future also established a basic fund-raising network, opening offices in early caucus and primary states such as Michigan and developing invaluable mailing lists that the Bush presidential campaign later bought. It paid campaign manager Lee Atwater's \$120,000 salary. And in a move that the FEC first challenged and then ruled legal, the PAC even paid to recruit and finance delegate candidates in Michigan, the first GOP caucus.

The third type of campaign committee used to skirt election laws is the exploratory committee. These groups don't have to file with the FEC if the campaign is still in a "testing-the-waters" phase. Thus Pat Robertson announced in September 1986 that he would run for president if three million people would sign a petition pledging to "work, pray, and give" for him. He then used his exploratory committee, Americans for Robertson, to conduct the petition drive. Of course, Robertson was intent on running all along. The petition drive was a thinly disguised vehicle for building a mailing list of likely donors—exactly the kind of activity forbidden by the FEC.

At some point, however, candidates do have to declare officially their candidacies, and the fund-raising campaign enters a new stage. For the most part, presidential candidates rely on contributions from individuals. (Most PACs feel their problems stem from Capitol Hill rather than the White House, and don't think their \$5,000 gift will buy much clout with a presidential candidate.) The main choice a campaign must make is whether to go after big donors, who can "max out" with \$1,000 gifts (the most that an

This is the second of two articles on fund-raising in the presidential campaigns. Last week's article, by Brian Sullam, "The Cash Campaign," concentrated on the Democrats.

individual is allowed to give), or seek larger numbers of small donors. Since the government matches the first \$250 of any contribution, four separate gifts of \$250 mean a total of \$2,000, whereas a one-time gift of \$1,000 produces only another \$250 in matching funds.

To succeed with big donors, campaigns have to recruit "bundlers," people who not only give \$1,000 themselves but who also convince dozens of friends to do the same. For Democrats, these bundlers tend to be philanthropists or movie stars. Republican bundlers come from the worlds of business, finance, and real estate. The small-donors approach depends on massive amounts of direct mail. Here the key is establishing a low-cost base of multiple donors.

The two Republican candidates already out of the race, Al Haig and Pete du Pont, began it at a distinct financial disadvantage. Neither could claim any widespread support for their candidacies. Both gambled—wrongly—on strong showings in Iowa or New Hampshire, hoping that such successes would provoke fresh infusions of cash.

Haig was the first to go. "Al Haig is a politician who does not have . . . well, he does have a constituency, but it's not a political one," says Dominique Saraceno, his campaign treasurer. "It could be a military one. Certainly he has no support from Republican organizations. He's not in the club." A political newcomer, Saraceno says that the campaign was shooting to raise \$5 million, mostly through friends in business. The campaign formed a group of about 75 "national advisers," including a number of retired military officers, in hopes of creating a fund-raising network. These advisers began holding medium-sized fund-raisers intended to raise between \$20,000 and \$75,000 each.

The money trickled in. "Al Haig would go to these fund-raisers, he would impress people, they'd like him, but they'd always end it by saying, 'He doesn't have a chance,'" says Saraceno. When Haig dropped out, he'd raised about a quarter of his planned \$5 million, including a \$50,000 loan out of his own pocket (the maximum candidates are allowed to give or loan to their own campaigns).

Pete du Pont was a little better off, but not much: a governor's clout vanishes when he leaves the post. Du Pont's campaign staff decided to focus on two areas for fund-raising. "We felt that the people associated with Pete, either his family or in Delaware, represented a constituency," says Edward Carpenter II, du Pont's campaign treasurer. The strategy worked: Carpenter estimates that members of the du Pont family directly or indirectly raised some \$300,000. Three of his top ten most profitable cities—Wilmington and Greenville, Delaware, and Greenwich, Connecticut—are family residences. About \$1 million came from Delaware, roughly one-fifth of du Pont's total.

But fund-raising dried up in July and August 1987, when, according to FEC records, the campaign raised under \$2,000 in itemized contributions. The reason? "People are away at that time with their children on vacation," says Carpenter. "Some effort was made to go to summer resorts, but it was not that successful." Fund-raising picked up again in the fall, but the summer drop-off showed the limits of preppy giving. Du Pont's campaign floundered

while its bankrollers played badminton on Fisher's Island.

Jack Kemp had a different strategy. "We knew that we would never have a \$1,000 donor base to compete with George Bush or Bob Dole," says his fund-raiser, Rod Smith. "But we also knew the government will match every contribution of \$250 or less." So Kemp decided to go after the smaller givers.

Direct mail is the most efficient way to raise large numbers of small contributions. But it's riskier than asking a rich friend to write a \$1,000 check. Campaigns without mailing lists of proven donors have to "prospect" by soliciting people who've never before given. Prospecting is expensive, often costing more than it raises. And direct mail is slow. It's hard to cash in on transient peaks like a good performance in a debate or a strong showing in a primary.

The Kemp campaign felt that if it could build a donor base of 100,000 people who would give several times, it could raise \$10 million, not including a high percentage of matching funds. "We tried to make Jack Kemp the heir apparent to Reagan, and tried to build a donor base that could relate to him," Smith says. But his first mailing of 5.5 million pieces cost \$1.4 million, and raised only \$1.2 million. Although Smith eventually built his donor base, that pattern continued: fund-raising costs have hovered around 40 percent of revenues, sometimes much higher. That's about twice what most fund-raisers say is acceptable without becoming a drain on the campaign. The expense forced Kemp to take out loans totaling \$1.1 million. He's currently about \$1.5 million in debt, even though he's raised nearly \$13 million. That debt has hampered campaign activities in state after state, as well as contributing to the impression of a struggling campaign.

Like Saraceno and Carpenter, Smith is frustrated by the system. He says that the giving limit is too low, forcing candidates to spend too much time in search of \$1,000 donations. And even when you find a group of potential \$1,000 donors, there's no guarantee of big bucks. "People that give \$1,000 want to meet Jack. A good number for a group at a fund-raiser would be, say, 20 people. So let's say I want to take Jack to Chicago to meet this group. Expenses could come to \$7,000, it would take a lot of Jack's time, a lot of staff time, and the most you'd get is \$20,000." It hardly seems worth the effort.

STILL, Republicans have had great success in fund-raising. Four (Kemp, Robertson, Dole, and Bush) have raised over \$10 million. Only one Democrat, Michael Dukakis, can say the same. Three of the Republicans—Dole, Robertson, and Bush—will probably raise the \$27 million maximum. The fact that Pete du Pont or Al Haig can't raise an eight-figure sum only shows that the system works. Few people wanted either to become president, and that lack of enthusiasm is reflected in the number and size of contributions they received. The \$1,000 limit means that candidates must have genuine public support, and it has removed the taint of corruption. "The whole reason for the limit was to take away the idea that anyone buys access. Well, nobody buys access for \$1,000," says Fred Bush. What about people

who get 250 of their friends to write a check for \$1,000? "It's a lot more work to do that. It's a commitment that gets people involved in the political process. Writing big checks is easy."

Like Kemp, Pat Robertson has made direct mail the focus of his fund-raising. Unlike Kemp, it's paid off extremely well. He has raised \$17.5 million, second only to Bush, and it seems inevitable that Robertson will succeed in reaching the maximum allowed.

Dick Weinhold, Robertson's finance director and former fund-raiser for Campus Crusade for Christ, knew the \$1,000 givers weren't likely to flock to Robertson. In any case, he had a ready-made direct mail base. The campaign's exploratory committee had already collected the names of three million people who'd committed to Robertson. "Many of these people would not be involved in politics if it weren't for Pat Robertson," Weinhold says.

The focus of Robertson's fund-raising effort now is something called the 1988 Club, a group of donors who give \$19.88 every month. Weinhold claims there are about 40,000 such givers, many of them supporters of Robertson's 700 Team. "These are people who are accustomed to giving every month," says Weinhold. That's what they did for Pat Robertson even before he was a presidential candidate.

But Robertson too has had trouble with fund-raising costs. He's spent \$4.3 million, about a quarter of revenues. Candidates are limited to fund-raising expenditures of \$4.6 million. So he keeps flirting with the idea of not accepting matching funds, which would allow him to ignore the spending and fund-raising limits. He'd mainly use the extra money to buy time on TV, a medium he knows well. Robertson has already accepted \$6.5 million from the government, but is considering giving it back. The FEC probably won't allow that, which should make for an interesting financial predicament. Still, the fact that he is even considering the idea shows the confidence he has in his supporters' willingness to support him indefinitely.

ULTIMATELY, the battle for the GOP nomination will come down to a battle between two establishment politicians: Bob Dole, a product of Capitol Hill, and George Bush, a child of Ivy League Republicans. Both planned to raise the maximum allowable money, turning to their respective establishments to find it.

The Dole strategy, which has raised \$16.5 million to date—about \$50,000 daily in January—is to track down funds from every possible source. Dole's finance team targeted four areas for fund-raising. Of their total, 47.5 percent would come from a finance committee, a series of donor groups across the country, each supposed to raise \$50,000. Another 36.3 percent would come from direct mail, an unusually small 12.4 percent from fund-raising events, and 3.8 percent from PAC giving. He had raised about \$640,000 from PACs through last year, more than any other GOP candidate. "We actively solicit PACs," says Kirk Clinkenbeard, Dole's finance director. "We have a full-time staffer that does nothing but work with them. You just keep the pressure on."

There are other money-lined nooks and crannies. Another

\$250,000 came from a legal transfer of leftover Dole for Senate ('86) funds. Elizabeth Dole has been a very successful fund-raiser for the campaign. " 'Will Liddy be there?' is the second question I get from people organizing fund-raisers," Clinkenbeard says. And fund-raising from Dole's home state has been impressive: two of his top ten cities in terms of giving were Wichita and Shawnee Mission, Kansas.

Dole has also turned to congressional friends for help. Last fall New York Senator Alfonse D'Amato staged a Dole fund-raiser at the Park Hyatt in Manhattan that raised \$1 million. GOP Representative Andy Ireland took Dole on a campaign swing through Florida and raised about the same. "These people know Dole's leadership ability," Ireland says. "Second, he's been so long on the Senate Finance Committee, and people in business know that."

Therein lies the key to Dole's financial success. People in business know him as the second-ranking Republican on that committee and as the Senate minority leader. Even if he loses the nomination or the presidential election, he will hold those positions until 1992. Win or lose, a contribution to Dole is considered a good investment. Tobacco growers, gun owners, textile manufacturers—these groups and others know how Dole has helped them in the Senate. It's only natural they want that help continued.

George Bush made no bones about going for large donors. Fred Bush argues: "We know we've got a broad base of support. This job is about raising as much money with the least cost as fast as you can." So far it has made sense. The Bush campaign has raised more money (over \$21 million so far) than any other presidential campaign ever. It has attracted 15,000 \$1,000 donors—another record. Dole, his closest competitor in this category, has about 7,000 \$1,000 donors. The cost of fund-raising has been kept below 20 percent of revenue by holding large, cost-efficient fund-raisers, usually at \$1,000 per person, and doing very little direct mail, none of it prospecting. The Bush network has also paid off. In 1986 he made 180 campaign appearances for members of Congress. Many of the people Bush helped endorsed him and put their fund-raising and political machines behind him. In New York, for example, Republican Congressman Guy Molinari helped ensure that Bush was the only candidate to file delegate slates in every district. PACs have played a relatively small part, giving about \$540,000 through the end of 1987.

The Bush campaign also devised a national committee of 350 people, bundlers who have helped line up those \$1,000 donors. They included Alec Courtelias, a Florida real estate developer, and Walter Ganzi, head of the Palm Management Company, which operates the Palm Restaurant chain. By 1987 Bush was finally attending more fund-raisers than funerals. One event in Houston raised \$750,000.

Fred Bush's campaign is almost over. He needs about \$3 million more to reach the maximum permitted. His only problem now is that the vice president has been too busy with politics to go to fund-raisers. "We'd like to wrap this up," Bush says. The other Bush campaign would like to do the same. Thanks to its financial dominance, it probably will. □

BOOKS AND THE ARTS

STANLEY KAUFFMANN ON FILMS

Changes of Voice and Place

In a recent essay on Isak Dinesen, Bonnie Marranca said:

Dinesen did not inhabit the world of literary fiction so much as she attached herself to a long line of storytellers who included, besides God, Scheherazade. There is a difference between storytelling and fiction. . . . The pleasure of fiction remains in the organization of a new narrative world.

Babette's Feast
(Orion Classics)

Distant Harmony
(Circle)

The world of the storyteller resides in the imaginary or absent "other" to whom the story is addressed. . . . Grounded in orality, that happy state of immediacy, its life as literature comes later.

The question now is: what about its life as film?

Before we turn to the film of Dinesen's "Babette's Feast," a few facts about the story (from Judith Thurman's biography of the author). The practicality of these facts may be healthful for our somewhat etherealized view of Dinesen. In the late 1940s she badly needed money and wanted to write for the American slick magazines but wasn't sure how to proceed. "Write about food," a friend advised her. "Americans are obsessed with food." So she wrote "Babette's Feast," which eventually was published in the *Ladies' Home Journal*. (Evidently not only Americans are obsessed with food. The story was later published in Denmark as a low-priced book, which sold 100,000 copies.)

We might expect that the antique, even divine, antecedents of storytelling which Marranca cites, aligned for popular acceptance, would guarantee a successful film from the story, but this hasn't come about. What went wrong? We know what went wrong with *The Immortal Story*, the only other film (to my knowledge) made from a Dinesen tale. Orson Welles, who directed it and played in it, had reached a state of dotty highhandedness that made the film muzzy and preten-

tious. That's not the case here: this director-screenwriter, Gabriel Axel—a name new to me—is not in Welles's class, either as genius or mad old tyrant. Axel and his colleagues have worked with curator's gloves. The difficulties, I'd say, are in the storytelling form itself.

To refresh you about the original: In the 1870s two elderly sisters live in a small Danish fishing village (transposed from the Norway of Dinesen's story). They are devout in their Protestant faith, as are their neighbors and friends. Their late father was a clergyman, and partly in order to assist him, the sisters had declined their suitors. They now have a French maid and cook, Babette, a middle-aged woman who came to the sisters by way of one of the rejected suitors, a Frenchman. Babette has long been playing the French lottery by mail. She wins; she sends for foodstuffs and wines and prepares a great dinner for her employers and their friends, including the other chief suitor of yore, now a general.

Babette had once been *maitresse de cuisine* in a famous Paris restaurant, and alone among the guests, the general recognizes the excellent dishes that are being served in this Danish cottage. His fellow diners are enjoined by religion not to notice or praise food or drink—a rule made easy by their usual fare—and don't respond to the general's rapture. After the guests leave, the two sisters learn from Babette that she spent her entire lottery winnings on the dinner and will not take recompense. Nor will she go back to France. She and her husband were Communards: he and their child were killed in the uprising. She will cling to her refuge here, but she wanted one last chance to display her great art. Besides, there's no artistic point in going back to France: the aristocracy that appreciated her art has been swept away by philistines of cuisine. She will stay here and cook dried fish and ale-bread soup for her two old benefactors.

Lightly but clearly interwoven in the story are oppositions of cultures—

pleasure-loving Catholic France, dour and hell-conscious Protestant Denmark. The climactic element is the fate of an artist perfect in her art who is doomed to frustration because the only ones who can appreciate her have been driven out by the political forces of which she herself was a part. At the end, one of the sisters, tears streaming down her cheeks, takes Babette in her arms and says, "Yet this is not the end! . . . In Paradise you will be the great artist that God meant you to be! . . . Ah, how you will enchant the angels!"

All these materials are in the film. The Scandinavian actors are all good. Stéphane Audran, as Babette, is even better. The cinematography by Henning Kristiansen fixes the chilled beauty of the landscape and the snugness of the interiors. Axel even makes a miniature spectacle out of the preparation of the great dinner. Yet the film seems remote, a mosaic fitted into place tile by tile rather than a current that bears us along to depths and conclusion.

The trouble is in the very quality of Dinesen's that Marranca notes: the original is a story told by a storyteller. When the story is taken out of the teller's voice and is broken up into a succession of scenes played by individuals who have voices and drives of their own, *Babette's Feast* becomes a quite different work. (Sporadic sound track narration is no re-

FILMS WORTH SEEING

Housekeeping. Unusual and admirable. Seemingly a comedy about a fey household in the Northwest, it touches large matters of American frontier spirit. (Reviewed 1/18/88)

Mélo. An old Parisian theater warhorse—one more triangle drama—given interest by an exceptional cast and Alain Resnais's deliberately theatrical direction. (3/7/88)

A Month in the Country. Yorkshire, 1919. Two young war veterans go through recovery and discovery. Crisp acting and writing bail out the rather soggy directing. (3/7/88)

The Unbearable Lightness of Being. Some plot elements of Kundera's novel, stripped of their rich context but so well acted that you wish the actors had been supplied with a better adaptation. (2/29/88).

SK

placement.) The original is a tale couched in the "orality" of one speaker, through whom all the characters are given life. These people were not designed to be dramatically autonomous and, given autonomy, are not full—or dramatic. All the ingredients of Dinesen's story pass before us, like all the ingredients of Babette's feast, but we can't really taste one more than the other. We watch the story as we look at the fabulous dishes, through a figurative glass window that only the storyteller herself could shatter. The "happy state of immediacy" is missing.

We segue, easily, from food to Luciano Pavarotti. He appears, almost spherical, in a documentary about his 1986 tour to China, accompanied by other singers and an orchestra. (The Italian government apparently sponsored the tour.) *Distant Harmony* was directed by DeWitt Sage, well-known in his field, and was photographed by Miroslav Ondricek, the Czech who did *Amadeus* and *Silkwood*, among others. They and their editor have tried to show how congenially the two cultures, Chinese and Italian, intermingled. This is done chiefly by intercutting sequences of Pavarotti's jam-packed performances with performances of Chinese plays and operas and with Pavarotti's attendance at various Chinese classes and exercises. He also gives a few singing lessons to Chinese student singers and appears fully made-up in a Chinese play. The harmony remained distant for me, enforced—a product for propaganda consumption on both sides of the world, though a pleasant enough charade while it was going on.

But one question kept persisting: What do the Chinese think of Pavarotti himself? The last comparable documentary I saw was of Isaac Stern in China. Stern is fat. I couldn't help wondering what his audiences thought of him, of the world from which he came. But Stern is a shadow compared with Pavarotti. What did those rows and rows of applauding lean Chinese think of him as a man? Or about his world? The slenderness of everyone around him makes Pavarotti look like a Japanese sumo wrestler who is able to belt out high notes. What a monster he is. Fat opera singers are an old tradition, not entirely gone; but none of the hefty ones of the past, Gigli or Tetrzzini or Schumann-Heink, was in this class. Maybe it's a tribute to Pavarotti's voice—not to his musicianship, which coarsens—that, outside of a context like China, we are able to overlook his monstrosity.

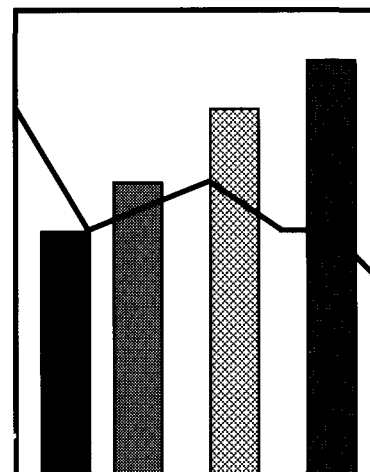
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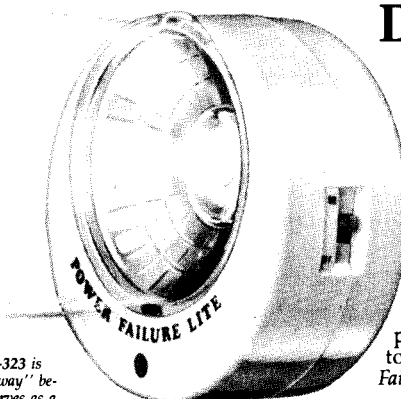


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EDWARD ROTHSTEIN ON MUSIC

Beethoven at Dusk

"For us musicians," Liszt wrote, Beethoven's "work is like the pillar of cloud and fire which guided the Israelites through the desert. . . . His obscurity and his light trace for us equally the path we have to follow; they are each of them a perpetual commandment, and infallible revelation." Beethoven did not inspire Liszt alone to imagery of religion, prophecy, and revelation. Berlioz invoked the archangel Michael. Schumann envied the man buried in the adjacent grave. Schubert is said to have spoken his name with reverence in a deathbed delirium.

Beethoven was the prophet whose Word reached a century of composers and musicians who stood at the very dawn of our musical tradition, setting forth its themes and preoccupations. Now, in these late days of the 20th century, as the tradition itself enters its twilight years and its claims seem to have lost so much of their force, his shadow still looms larger than ever. It is still Beethoven who defines the culture of the concert hall and the extent of its once thriving ambitions. Orchestras still build their seasons around his symphonies. Pianists still call Bach's *Well-tempered Clavier* the Old Testament, Beethoven's 32 piano sonatas the New.

And like the New Testament, Beethoven's music revised and reinterpreted what had preceded him. Our musical universe seems to turn on him. Before Beethoven there was the music of the patron and court and church; after Beethoven there was the music of the bourgeoisie and concert hall. Before Beethoven music showed something—as in a fugue; individual movements were pictorial or emphatic, revealing a single sentiment or passion. After Beethoven came music that told something, presenting the bildungsroman of a theme, a narrative account of transformation. Before Beethoven most music was written to serve a function, to be played at a particular place at a particular time. After Beethoven music acquired a new autonomy: most of it was written to stand on its own, to present its own aesthetic universe along with a claim to higher truth.

These are not casual distinctions. The play of form and manners was exchanged for the drama of inner life. As E.T.A. Hoffman put it in 1810, on hear-

ing the *Fifth Symphony*: "Beethoven's music opens the floodgates of fear, of terror, of horror, of pain, and arouses that yearning for the infinite which is the essence of Romanticism." It was as if the *St. Matthew Passion* had been rewritten as autobiography. Beethoven would not have disagreed. "Oh you men who think or say that I am malevolent, stubborn, or misanthropic, how greatly do you wrong me," Beethoven wrote, finding his approaching deafness terrifying:

You do not know the secret cause which makes me seem that way to you. . . . Ah, how could I possibly admit an infirmity in one sense which ought to be more perfect in me than in others. . . . Such incidents [of deafness] have driven me almost to despair; a little more . . . and I would have ended my life—it was only my *art* that held me back.

Art saves. Not even Mozart would have claimed such power for his work.

Of course there are nuances needed in such a schematic picture, but the transformation itself is indisputable. Beethoven was one of the first Romantic composers in a musical tradition that has been fundamentally Romantic in its understanding and expectations of what art can be and do. It is perhaps no accident, then, that during the last two decades Beethoven has become the subject of extraordinary scholarly labors. After more than ten years of work, for example, Douglas Johnson, Alan Tyson, and Robert Winter (in *The Beethoven Sketchbooks*, University of California Press, 611 pp., \$75) pieced together Beethoven's sketchbooks—those scattered pages and fragments that chronicle the origins and development of the compositions in Beethoven's mind.

A decade ago, Maynard Solomon published a remarkable biography, *Beethoven* (Schirmer Books), that has become a definitive interpretation of the life. He analyzed Beethoven's character (at times in excessively orthodox psychoanalytic style). He identified the mysterious "Immortal Beloved," the woman whom Beethoven loved but could not marry, as Antonie Brentano, the wife of a friend; and he chronicled the crises that shaped a life, and in turn, our musical heritage. In April, Harvard University Press will publish Solomon's *Beethoven Essays* (384 pp., \$29.50) in which he fills out the earlier biographical vision with stunning detail

and intelligence. It includes a translation of the diary in which Beethoven noted everything from bon mots derived from the *Bhagavad Gita* to his cries of extraordinary pain ("God, God, my refuge, my rock, O my all, you see my innermost heart. . . . O hear, ever ineffable one, hear me, your unhappy, most unhappy of all mortals"). In addition, the subtle and touching biographical notes of Franz Wegeler and Ferdinand Ries—two of Beethoven's closest friends—have been published in English for the first time in *Beethoven Remembered* (Great Ocean Publishers, 224 pp., \$16.95).

As the life and music are re-examined, it is no surprise that Beethoven is being performed differently as well. The musical movement of "authenticity" has turned now from the vagaries of Baroque music to Beethoven himself, inspiring performances of his music on instruments of his time, accompanied by varied claims of fidelity to metronome markings, pitches, and musical style.

What sort of Beethoven emerges from these biographical texts, from the music, and from the new performances? If Beethoven is so clear a representative of—indeed, inspiration for—our musical tradition, what do these late visions reveal about our most central concerns? We all have heard the familiar tales: Beethoven destroying the dedication of the *Eroica Symphony* to Napoleon after the ruler crowned himself emperor; Beethoven defying the court of the nobility with the proud proclamation, "My nobility is *here and here*," as he pointed to his head and heart; Beethoven's "studied rudeness" and impertinence, his loud laugh, his slovenly dress that late in life caused him to be arrested for vagrancy.

The most common tales emphasize a certain liberal heroism. Here was a genius who took his nobility to be in his art and held it in higher esteem than all the honors and titles of his era. He cared not for the manners and the hypocrisy of his society, but found his calling in the proud declarations of the *Eroica* and the *Fifth Symphony*, and in the spiritual meditations of the late string quartets. "I shall take Fate by the throat," Beethoven wrote, "it shall not subdue me entirely." "I live only in my music," Beethoven wrote to Wegeler, asserting it as his refuge and his strength.

This popular image of the composer has elements of truth in it, and indeed it helped inspire a century of composers entranced by the heroic and the eccentric, who worshipped in avant-garde

spirit the rejection of social hierarchies and eagerly expanded on the pride and autonomy of the artist. The "human" side of the mythic character was just as affecting. It is astonishing to read, in the accounts by contemporaries, of the endearing sweetness that seemed to accompany the bearish and boorish manners, just as in the music the peasant charm of a Scherzo can follow the most sublime of meditations and be followed by the most violent of outbursts.

BUT SOLOMON'S biography and essays reveal that the full truth is far more interesting. To understand Beethoven as a sort of archetypal precursor to modern liberalism, proudly rejecting the notion of nobility, or as a model revolutionary, scorning inherited authority for the sake of freedom, is a distortion. He may have angrily removed Bonaparte from the dedication page of the *Eroica*, but seven years later he considered dedicating the *C-major Mass* to Napoleon, and he dedicated the *Septet* to the Empress Maria Theresa. He may (or more probably may not) have said "My nobility is *here* and *here*," but it was more important for Beethoven to be taken as nobility, the "van" slurring into a "von" without correction.

According to Anton Schindler, Beethoven's amanuensis and censor and tragically crude Boswell (he destroyed half of the conversation books Beethoven used to communicate with friends late in life because of their supposedly unseemly character), the rejection of Beethoven's noble status by the court "drove Beethoven beside himself; for he considered it the grossest insult that he had ever received." In fact Solomon traces a "nobility pretense" throughout Beethoven's life. He doubted, at times, even that he was his father's son and refused, despite his friends' urgings, to correct the rumor that he was the illegitimate son of the King of Prussia.

His real father, an alcoholic tenor who beat him regularly, was never referred to by name in any of Beethoven's surviving documents, and his brother, bearing the same name, was referred to by such phrases as "brain-eater" and "brother Cain." Solomon argues that Beethoven's ambivalence about nobility and authority is connected to the same powerful passions that seemed to rule his family life, that authority and rebellion were not abstract issues, but ones of immediate personal importance. Solomon even suggests a strong psychological component to Beethoven's deafness, a with-

drawal from the world: "Live only in your art," he wrote in his diary, "the only existence for you." Mixed with that acquiescence was also excruciating pain.

BEETHOVEN'S inner demons become all the more disturbing and powerful for being so concretely understood. Moreover, having identified the "Immortal Beloved," Solomon in his essays now gives a full portrait of the young married woman who loved Beethoven in turn. Beethoven chose a sort of dissatisfied isolation, of yearning; but the breakdown of this affair in 1812, Solomon suggests, led to a virtual mental breakdown as well. Beethoven became unkempt, isolated, withdrawn. He wrote to himself, "Thou mayest no longer be a man." And when he finally turned to composition after years of silence, it was to the empty bombast of *Wellington's Victory* and *Der glorreiche Augenblick*.

Solomon's most important achievement is to demonstrate with astonishing clarity the connection between the psychological dramas of the life and the stylistic transformations of the music. What ushered in the late period was a decade-long conflict in which Solomon sees all the themes of Beethoven's life coming into play. After years of litigation, he successfully wrested the guardianship of his nephew from his brother's widow. It was an effort to turn himself into a father, to create a mythic family after all hope of normal family life had been dashed. The adopted nephew was loved, and beaten, treated with immense compassion and heartless scorn, until he attempted the act of suicide so often considered by his uncle.

Solomon sees "many ghosts at the party" of these final years, a decade of fantastical imaginings and harrowing tales. Beethoven was said by one friend to be unable to distinguish the real from the imagined "and yet for all his odd ways, which . . . often bordered on being offensive, there was something so inexpressibly touching and noble in him that one could not but esteem him and feel drawn to him." Out of these conflicts—and a resolution—came the transcendental works of the late period.

In an essay on the *Ninth Symphony*, Solomon argues that the extraordinarily concentrated development of motifs and themes is part of a programmatic quest in the work for a lost paradise. It is made almost explicit in the final movement: one by one the themes of earlier movements are rejected and the bass declares

in a recitative on the verge of speech, "Oh friends, not these sounds," just before the "Ode to Joy" theme makes its sung entrance. That musical quest for the "lovely divine spark" of joy in this symphony is inseparable, Solomon suggests, from the struggles of his life:

The objects of his desire seem to be quite on the surface here: the reconstruction of a splintered family ["Alle menschen"], recapture of an idyllic past ["Elysium"], achievement of a loving brotherhood ["werden Bruder"], attainment of an extended moment of pure joy, and eternal life. . . . The objects of his fears—more obscure, even opaque—are equally at hand . . . the egoistic and authoritarian components of his character, constantly at war with his innate altruism, eruptions of irrationality, countered by a grandiose complexity of aesthetic structure, a variety of terrors, known and unknown.

Solomon's vision of the life has all the energy and reflection of the music itself. Its psychoanalytic texture turning and returning on itself, its implications of a life journey undertaken and resolved, its recurrent themes and motifs transformed and recapitulated, its respect for the reflective powers of the human mind place it in the tradition of Ro-

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manticism evident in Beethoven's music.

What is the style and spirit of this mercurial and powerful music? How did it have the impact it has had on our tradition? The main musical form in which Beethoven worked was the sonata—a form that was rigorously defined only after Beethoven's death. That definition is familiar to any music student: the basic thematic material is presented in the "exposition" section of the sonata; that material is then altered, appearing in new aspects or combinations in a "development" section; finally the original material returns in a "recapitulation" with all themes stated in the tonic, or home key. Such a pattern had been in use for decades before Beethoven, but only in the Romantic period did the sonata begin to resemble a literary narrative—an epic tale of a theme whose internal tensions are explored, analyzed, and finally resolved.

BEETHOVEN, as Charles Rosen, Donald Tovey, and earlier scholars have shown, turned the sonata into a style of immense concentration. All thematic material in a movement might be derived from the initial statement of the theme, its elements providing the conflicts that will play themselves out in the work. The development sections typically display intense dissections and repetitions of the components of the theme, each transformation building on the one before until the final restoration comes as the dramatic climax of the work. The listener experiences the process of reinterpretation and transformation. When the theme is heard at the close, it is not heard as it once was. The result is a mode of narrative, the evolutionary journey of departure and return that the literary scholar M.H. Abrams identified as a Romantic archetype; we finally feel the material "achieve a full and triumphant awareness of its identity, of the significance of its past, and of its accomplished destiny."

Beethoven insisted that he was a *Tondichter*—a "tone poet." And like such Romantic word poets as Wordsworth, he took as his subject the workings of his own mind. It's not the themes (which in Beethoven's case are often mere fragments, such as the famous rhythmic gesture of the *Fifth Symphony*) that are his true interest. The *Appassionata Sonata*, for example, has a simple theme that first consists of a tonic arpeggio that sweeps across four octaves of the keyboard, then ends in a peculiar trill that seems to

come from a world apart, bringing the energetic rhythms to a tenuous halt. The two parts of this theme generate nearly every rhythmic, thematic, and harmonic element of the first movement, as if an immense effort were being made to comprehend this difference and to resolve its tensions.

The subject of the work becomes not the theme, but the transformations of the theme. This is something that was not true of Bach, who could write a fugue without radically transforming the original material, and without thinking in a narrative fashion. Even Mozart, before his late works, treated the development of the sonata less urgently. But with much of Beethoven's music, the work becomes a narrative of a journey of understanding, spiralling back to its origins, a return that is also a movement toward greater awareness. That journey is carried out through a mixture of willful analysis and anxious submission; the music is pushed even as it pulls. As the *Sketchbooks* show, this required an excruciating struggle with the musical material. But the immense disparity between the folklike simplicity of the sonatas' themes and the awesome analyses and emotional energy they inspire carries the works toward the sublime.

BEETHOVEN'S music stands midway between Kant and Hegel, accepting the former's notion of a priori principles, while asserting the latter's vision of a continually evolving consciousness. He displays a faith that his own mind is no different from any other—and thus creates a truly public music. But he is also a believer in the egotistical sublime: the ever-changing truth can be found only within, thus linking the life and mind of the composer to the fate of his music. Beethoven's compositions are at once thoroughly objective, even brutal in their clarity, and hauntingly subjective, as if they were the record of a confession.

The challenge for performers has been immense. The greatest Beethoven players—including Schnabel and Furtwängler—have managed to balance these seemingly opposing realms. The music is not sentimentalized but personalized; the structure is revealed without distortion, in all its systematic glory, but it breathes with urgency. (Listen, too, to the newly released recordings of rarely heard Russian pianists on Harmonia Mundi—Maria Yudina playing the *Hammerklavier*, dating from 1952, and Heinrich Neuhaus playing Opus

31, No. 2, dating from 1948.)

The latest musicians to take up the challenge come from an unexpected quarter. Ironically the authenticity movement, which began at the turn of this century as a rejection of Romantic bourgeois mainstream repertoire, has now turned to that tradition's exemplar, Beethoven. But in place of the bourgeois focus on individuality and expression, the authenticity movement has asserted that there exists a true way—an objectively true way—to approach the music, to be found only by studying the circumstances of the music's birth. It's cleverest riposte: the harpsichordist Wanda Landowska telling a colleague, "You play Bach your way, I will play him his way."

THE MOVEMENT'S achievements with Baroque and Renaissance repertory have been considerable, partly because its view is compelling: the manner and means of performance of this music had been clouded by the regnant musical culture of the 19th century. But once the movement turns to the 19th century, as it is now doing with Beethoven, it confronts an obstacle. That century may have misinterpreted the Baroque, but it did not misinterpret Beethoven; its music was largely shaped by the correct understanding. Liszt and Wagner and Berlioz and Brahms understood precisely how this music worked, how it balanced the objective and the subjective, how it stood at once for universal reason and impassioned individuality.

What, then, needs correction? Of course the forte-pianos of Beethoven and Schubert can help reveal certain aspects of the music blurred by the thrust of the late-19th-century keyboard, and the use of early instruments can clarify contrapuntal lines; but later instruments can also reveal aspects of the music slighted by earlier ones. The *Hammerklavier Sonata* is meant to sound like it exceeds the bounds of any instrument. Can this be as shattering a sensation on a Broadwood pianoforte as on a Steinway? Moreover, Beethoven's musical attention, like Bach's, is less on instrumental color and texture than on structure and argument; later in his life, of course, the instrumental sound was entirely imagined.

When we listen, for example, to the Collegium Aureum's performance of the *Eroica* under the direction of the concertmaster, Franzjosef Maier (ProArte), or to the *Fifth Symphony* played by the Hanover Band (Nimbus), the distortions are

immediately apparent. These symphonies, representative of the most emphatic work of Beethoven in his "heroic" period, are turned on their heads, sounding almost Mozartean. The performers ache for the spirit of the Enlightenment, not for any images of titans wrestling with the gods, or for Hoffman's vision of infinite yearning in the *Fifth*. Phrasing becomes abrupt, detached, breaking the brooding line; the music becomes more nervous, less certain of itself and less imposing. Christopher Hogwood, one of the most well-known figures in the authenticity movement today, attempts something similar in his own cycle of the symphonies with the Academy of Ancient Music (now proceeding on the L'Oiseau-Lyre label). But with Hogwood, the problem is often less conceptual than purely musical. He is fine at moments of driving energy, but elsewhere he can chug along as if he doesn't even believe in what he is doing; the phrasing becomes casual rather than committed, each thought seeming to ignore its predecessor.

ROGER NORRINGTON, who has recorded three of the symphonies so far on Angel, directing the London Classical Players, presents a more challenging interpretation even though he shares his colleagues' point of view. In the notes to his recording of the *Ninth* he writes, "We want to restore this *Ninth Symphony* to the humane quicksilver thought-world of the Classical Period, whose greatest progeny it is."

In quest of this quicksilver world, Norrington insists on an orthodox interpretation of Beethoven's metronome markings for the symphonies (as have such conductors as Benjamin Zander). I have always been a skeptic on this issue, feeling that absolute tempo counts for far less than conception; a great musician can give an Adagio a dancing thrust and make a Scherzo into a suspension of movement. In this case, it means the third movement Adagio moves along at almost twice the pace Georg Solti uses on his new London recording. It turns the recitatives of the final movement into stormy declarations. And it slows down the March in the center of the movement so that it becomes difficult indeed to imagine it setting the words, "run your course joyfully, like a hero off to victory." "Traditional" tempos—which have also varied widely—treat the final movement as an apotheosis, beginning with its literal finding of voice and

ending with a rush of joy. Norrington's tempos, along with his love of musical punctuation, give the music an unsettled quality. We are not sure how much irony or parody there is in that village march at the heart of the movement, or how much empathy there is to be found in the nervous patter of the third movement Adagio.

This makes it a very modern performance, detached, disturbing. But there is also something Baroque in its manners. We don't feel the music's forward motion; we attend instead to its mercurial temper, its spasmodic shifts of attitude. This performance of this willful, grandly obsessive symphony would have failed completely, in fact, were it not for the conductor's inherent musicality. It is put to even greater service in the recordings of the *Second* and *Eighth Symphonies*, which would have to be considered important whatever their claims to authenticity. Norrington applies a considered intelligence to every gesture, exposing each phrase to the light. He shares a concern for structure and balance displayed by Frans Brüggen conducting the Orchestra of the 18th Century in Beethoven's *First Symphony* on Philips. Despite the considered energy of these performances, they leave us a Beethoven who is neither Classical nor Romantic, but rather someone very like ourselves, graciously agnostic.

WHAT THAT MEANS for our musical tradition is another matter. For Beethoven and his musical heirs, music was not just a matter of style or tempo but was something more vital. It was bound up with the experience of life itself. Music was not entertainment or mere technical display; it was part of a spiritual quest. Bettina Brentano, one of Beethoven's friends, claims in a remarkable letter to Goethe that Beethoven explained his philosophy of composition to her and urged her to communicate it to him; if her transcription is invented (as is sometimes suspected), it is a perceptive invention indeed:

The more the soul takes sensuous nourishment from music, the more prepared does the mind grow for a happy understanding with it. . . . All true invention is a moral progress. To submit to its inscrutable laws, and by means of these laws to tame and guide one's own mind, so that the manifestations of art may pour out: this is the isolating principle of art. To be dissolved in its manifestations, this is our dedication to the divine which calmly exercises its power

over the raging of the untamed elements and so lends to the imagination its highest effectiveness.

Art is an education of the soul, at once sensuous and moral. Its laws are those of reason, its powers those of divinity, its domain one's own mind. This is surely the vision of the composer of the Opus 111 Sonata, the man who could with rigorous concentration create variations on a theme that would end in suspension of all time and tension, as if the very idea of variation were being dissolved, its fi-



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nal phrases containing a musical gesture that Thomas Mann's Kretschmar calls, in *Doctor Faustus*, a "farewell" to sonata form, "the most conciliatory, pathetically reconciling thing in the world."

Thinking about Beethoven in such a manner is somewhat risky; it goes against the contemporary grain. It was more properly the vocation of such earlier figures as Romain Rolland and J.W.N. Sullivan ("Beethoven was a man who experienced all that we can experience, who suffered all that we can suffer. If, at the end, he seems to reach a state 'above

the battle,' we also know that no man ever knew more bitterly what the battle is"). But reason and faith are close to the heart of Beethoven's music. This is what binds him to Berlioz, to Liszt, to Wagner, and later to Mahler and to Schoenberg. Beethoven defined what reason was to accomplish in music and to what transcendent levels it was to lead; and he knew that nothing could be accomplished without struggle. If we can no longer quite believe in the struggle, at least his music reminds us of what it could once achieve.

through time, and the Furies, in whose existence we are forced to believe . . . perpetuate the tormentor's work by denying peace to the tormented."

Tadeusz Borowski, for instance, author of *This Way for the Gas, Ladies and Gentlemen*, eluded the gas at both Auschwitz and Dachau from 1943 to 1945; in Warsaw, in 1951, not yet 30, three days before the birth of his daughter, he turned on the household gas. Suicide. The poet Paul Celan: a suicide. The Austrian-born philosopher Hans Mayer—another suicide—who later became Jean Améry by scrambling his name into a French anagram, was in Auschwitz together with Levi, though the two never chanced on one another. Before his capture and deportation, Améry had been in the Belgian resistance and was subjected to Gestapo torture. After the war, Améry and Levi corresponded about their experiences. Levi esteemed Améry, appeared to understand him, but evidently could not like him—because, he says, Améry was a man who "traded blows." "A gigantic Polish criminal," Levi recounts, "punches [Améry] in the face over some trifle; he, not because of an animallike reaction but because of a reasoned revolt against the perverted world of the Lager, returns the blow as best he can." "Hurting all over from the blows, I was satisfied with myself," Levi quotes Améry; but for himself, Levi asserts,

"trading punches" is an experience I do not have, as far back as I can go in memory; nor can I say I regret not having it. . . . Go[ing] down onto the battlefield . . . was and is beyond my reach. I admire it, but I must point out that this choice, protracted throughout his post-Auschwitz existence, led [Améry] to such severity and intransigence as to make him incapable of finding joy in life, indeed of living. Those who "trade blows" with the entire world achieve dignity but pay a very high price for it because they are sure to be defeated.

Remarkably, Levi concludes: "Améry's suicide, which took place in Salzburg in 1978 [nine years before Levi's leap into the stairwell], like other suicides allows for a nebula of explanations, but in hindsight, that episode of defying the Pole offers one interpretation of it."

This observation—that the rage of resentment is somehow linked to self-destruction—is, in the perplexing shadow of Levi's own suicide, enigmatic enough and bears returning to. For the moment, it may be useful to consider that Levi's reputation—rather, the grave and noble voice that sounds and sum-

THE SUICIDE NOTE

The Drowned and the Saved
by Primo Levi

translated by Raymond Rosenthal

(Summit Books, 203 pp., \$17.95)

Primo Levi, an Italian Jewish chemist from Turin, was liberated from Auschwitz by a Soviet military unit in January 1945, when he was 25, and from that moment of reprieve (*Moments of Reprieve* was one of his titles) until shortly before his death in April 1987, he went on recalling, examining, reasoning, recording—telling the ghastly tale—in book after book. That he saw himself as a possessed scribe of the German hell we know from the epigraph to his final volume, *The Drowned and the Saved*—familiar lines taken from "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and newly startling to a merely literary reader, for whom the words of Coleridge's poem have never before rung out with such an anti-metaphorical contemporary demand, or seemed so cruel:

Since then, at an uncertain hour,
That agony returns,
And till my ghastly tale is told
This heart within me burns.

Seized by the survivor's heart, this stanza no longer answers to the status of Lyrical Ballad, and still less to the English department's quintessential Romantic text redolent of the supernatural; it is all deadly self-portrait. In the haven of an Italian spring—40 years after setting down the somber narrative called in Italian "If This Be a Man" and published in English as *Survival in Auschwitz*—Levi hurled himself into the well of a spiral

staircase four stories deep, just outside the door of the flat he was born in, where he had been living with his wife and aged ailing mother. Suicide. The composition of the last Lager manuscript was complete, the heart burned out; there was no more to tell.

There was no more to tell. That, of course, is an assumption nobody can justify, and nobody perhaps ought to dare to make. Suicide is one of the mysteries of the human will, with or without a farewell note to explain it. And it remains to be seen whether *The Drowned and the Saved* is, after all, a sort of suicide note.

Levi, to be sure, is not the first writer of high distinction to survive hell and to suggest, by a self-willed death, that hell in fact did not end when the chimneys closed down, but was simply freshening for a second run—Auschwitz being the first hell, and post-Auschwitz the second; and if "survival" is the thing in question, then it isn't the "survivor" whose powers of continuation are worth marveling at, but hell itself. The victim who has escaped being murdered will sometimes contrive to finish the job, not because he is attached to death—never this—but because death is under the governance of hell, and it is in the nature of hell to go on and on: inescapability is its rule, No Exit its sign. "The injury cannot be healed," Levi writes in *The Drowned and the Saved*; "it extends

mons through his pages—has been consummately free of rage, resentment, violent feeling, or any overt drive to “trade blows.” The voice has been one of pristine sanity and discernment. Levi has been unwilling to serve either as preacher or elegist. He has avoided polemics; he has shrunk from being counted as one of those message-bearers “whom I view with distrust: the prophet, the bard, the soothsayer. That I am not.”

INSTEAD, he has offered himself as a singular witness—singular because he was “privileged” to survive as a laboratory slave, meaning that German convenience, at least temporarily, was met more through the exploitation of his training as a chemist than it would have been through his immediate annihilation as a Jew; and, from our own point of view, because of his clarity and selflessness as a writer. It is selfless to eschew freely-running emotion, sermonizing, the catharsis of anger, when these so plainly plead their case before an unprecedentedly loathsome record of criminals and their crimes. Levi has kept his distance from blaming, scolding, insisting, vilifying, lamenting, crying out. His method has been to describe—meticulously, analytically, clarifyingly. He has been a Darwin of the death camps: not the Virgil of the German hell but its scientific investigator.

Levi himself recognizes that he has been particularly attended to for this quality of detachment. “From my trade,” he affirms in *The Drowned and the Saved*,

I contracted a habit that can be variously judged and defined at will as human or inhuman—the habit of never remaining indifferent to the individuals that chance brings before me. They are human beings but also “samples,” specimens in a sealed envelope to be identified, analyzed, and weighed. Now, the sample book that Auschwitz had placed before me was rich, varied, and strange, made up of friends, neutrals, and enemies, yet in any case food for my curiosity, which some people, then and later, have judged to be detached. . . . I know that this “naturalistic” attitude does not derive only or necessarily from chemistry, but in my case it did come from chemistry.

Whatever its source—chemistry or, as others have believed, a lucent and humane restraint—this “naturalistic” approach has astonished and inspired readers and critics. Irving Howe speaks of Levi’s “unruffled dignity” and “purity of spirit,” James Atlas of his “magisterial

equanimity.” Rita Levi-Montalcini, a recipient of the 1986 Nobel Prize in medicine and a fellow Turinese, devotes an epilogue in her memoir, *In Praise of Imperfection*, to Levi’s “detachment and absence of hatred.” You, she addresses Levi, have “come out of the most atrocious of all experiences with an upright forehead and a spirit pure.”

A temperament so transparent, so untainted, so unpolemical (indeed, so anti-polemical)—so like clear water—has, however, also provided a kind of relief, or respite, for those who hope finally to evade the gravamen of Levi’s chronicle. The novelist Johanna Kaplan sets it out for us: “*Oh, that? Oh, that again?* . . . Because by now, after all the powerful, anguished novels . . . after all the simple, heart-rending documentary accounts, the stringent, haunting historians’ texts, the pained and arduous movies—that shocking newsreel footage . . . after all the necessary, nightmare lists of involuntary martyrology, by now our response to the singular horrific barbarity of our time is—just the tiniest bit dutiful.”

THIS DESIRE to recoil may describe all of us; and yet we—some of us—drag through these foul swamps, the documents, the films, the photos, the talks, the tales, the conferences, year after year, taking it in and taking it in: perhaps because we are dutiful, perhaps because the fury of outrage owns us, more likely because we are the children of mercy and will not allow the suffering to recede into mere past-ness, a time not ours, for which we are not responsible. We press on with the heartsick job of assimilating the imagination of savagery because in some seizure of helplessly belated justice we want to become responsible for the murdered.

In short, guilt: in one form or another we are wounded by conscience. Either, as Jews, we were not there with the others who stood in for us as victims, or, as Christians, we were too much there, represented by the familiar upbringing of the criminals, with whose religious inheritance we have so much in common. Guilt in our absence, guilt in our presence. Jewish guilt; Christian guilt; English, French, Italian, Croatian, Ukrainian, American guilt. Guilt of the Germans whose patriotism gave birth to the criminals. Guilt of the Irish and the Swedes who hid behind neutrality. Guilt over zeal, guilt over apathy.

All of this Levi as naturalist skirts. He appears to have nothing to do with any

of it. He is not in favor of a generalized anguish. His aim has been to erect a principled barrier against any show of self-appointed fanaticism, from any direction. Book after book has shied away from the emotive accusatory issues. Above all, Levi is careful not to blur victim and victimizer. He is wary of the sentimentalizers, preeners, hypothesizers: “I do not know,” he writes, “and it does not much interest me to know, whether in my depths there lurks a murderer, but I do know that I was a guiltless victim and not a murderer . . . to confuse [the murderers] with their victims is a moral disease or an aesthetic affectation or a sinister sign of complicity.” He is a stringent taxonomist, on the side of precision: the crimes and the criminals have an identifiable habitation and name.

THIS MAY BE one reason—it is not the only one—it has been possible to read Levi with soul’s pain (how could this be otherwise?), but without guilt. It is not that Levi absolves; rather, he mutes the question of absolution—a question always in the forefront for messengers as radically different from each other as, say, Elie Wiesel and Raul Hilberg. Hilberg’s investigations in particular, coolly data-obsessed as they are, have erased the notion of “bystander” status in Nazi Germany. Levi has devoted himself less to social history and psychological motivation than to the microscope, with its exactly circumscribed field of vision. Society-as-organism is not the area under his scrutiny, as it is for Hilberg; neither is suffering as metaphor, as with Wiesel’s emblematic mourning madmen.

The advantage, for many of Levi’s readers, has been—dare one say this?—a curious peacefulness: the consequence of the famous “detachment.” Levi is far from being a peaceful witness, but because he has not harassed or harangued or dramatized or poetized or shaken a fist or shrieked or politicized (a little of the last, but only a little), because he has restricted himself to observation, notation, and restraint, it becomes alarmingly easy to force him into a false position. If it was futile for him to plead, as he once did, “I beg the reader not to go looking for messages,” it is nevertheless disconcerting that of all the various “lessons” that might have been drawn from Levi’s penetrations, the one most prevalent is also the coarsest and the most misleading: uplift.

Rarely will you come on a publisher’s

blare as shallow as the one accompanying *The Drowned and the Saved*: "a wondrous celebration of life . . . a testament to the indomitability of the human spirit and humanity's capacity to defeat death through meaningful work, morality and art." Contemptible puffery, undermining every paragraph of the text it ostensibly promotes; and if it is designed to counter "Oh, that? Oh, that again?," then it is even more contemptible. Celebration of life? Defeat of death? Meaningful work? Morality? Art? What callousness, what cravenness, before the subject at hand! In the Lager world, Levi tells us again and again, "work" was pointless, and deliberately so, in order to intensify torment; morality was reduced to staying alive as long as possible, and by any means; and art was non-existent. Applied to a place where murder claimed daily dominion, "celebration of life" can only be a mockery, or—if that phrase is meant to describe Levi's intent as witness—a double mockery: his intent is to let us see for ourselves the nature, extent, and depth of the German crime.

YET "celebration of life," that falsifying balm, is hardly untypical of the illusory—or self-deluding—glow of good feeling (or, at worst, absence of bad feeling) that generally attaches to Levi's name. Of the scribes of the Holocaust, Levi appears to be the one who least troubles, least wounds, least implicates, the reader. A scientific or objective attitude will inform, certainly, but declines any show of agitation. What we have had from Levi, accordingly, is the portrait of a psychological oxymoron: the well-mannered cicerone of hell, mortal horror in a decorous voice.

"Améry called me 'the forgiver,'" Levi notes. "I consider this neither insult nor praise but imprecision. I am not inclined to forgive, I never forgave our enemies of that time . . . because I know no human act that can erase a crime; I demand justice, but I am not able, personally"—here again is this insistent declaration of refusal—"to trade punches or return blows." All the same (untenable as he might consider it), Levi is widely regarded, if not quite as "the forgiver," then as the survivor whose books are, given their subject matter, easiest to take; one gets the impression (and from Levi's own pages) that he has been read in Germany far more willingly than have some others. He writes, as his countrywoman remarked, in the "absence of hatred."

And so it has seemed until this mo-

ment. *The Drowned and the Saved* reveals something else. It is a detonation, all the more volcanic because so unexpected. Yet "detonation" is surely, at least from Levi's point of view, the wrong word: concussion is an all-of-a-sudden thing. In *The Drowned and the Saved*, the change of tone is at first muted, faint. Gradually, cumulatively, rumble by rumble, it leads to disclosure, exposure—one can follow the sizzle flying along the fuse; by the last chapter the pressure is so powerful, the rage so immense, that "detachment" has long given way to convulsion. What was withheld before is now imploded in these pages. *The Drowned and the Saved* is the record of a man returning blows with all the might of human fury, in full knowledge that the pen is mightier than the fist. The convulsions of rage have altered the nature of the prose, and—if we can judge by Levi's suicide—the man as well. Almost no one, interestingly, has been disposed to say of Levi's final testimony that it is saturated in deadly anger—as if it would be too cruel to tear from him the veil of the spirit pure. It may be cruel; but it is Levi's own hand that tears away the veil and sets the fuse.

THE FUSE is ignited almost instantly, in the preface:

No one will ever be able to establish with precision how many, in the Nazi apparatus, could not not know about the frightful atrocities being committed, how many knew something but were in a position to pretend they did not know, and, further, how many had the possibility of knowing everything but chose the more prudent path of keeping their eyes and ears (and above all their mouths) well shut.

Here is the heralding of the indictment that will emerge: it is the German people whom Levi subjects to judgment, which may account for his rarely shrinking from the use of "German," where, nowadays, "Nazi" is usually the polite, because narrower, term. In the preface also may be found the single most terrible sentence ever offered on the issue of what is variously called "restitution," "changed attitudes," "the new generation," and all the rest: "The crematoria ovens themselves were designed, built, assembled, and tested by a German company, Topf of Wiesbaden (it was still in operation in 1975, building crematoria for civilian use, and had not considered the advisability of changing its name)." *Had not considered the advisability of changing its name*: this applies equally to Krupp,

notorious for slave labor, and, in its most celebrated incarnation, to Hitler's "people's car," the ubiquitous Volkswagen, driven unself-consciously by half the world. (An unself-conscious irony, by the way, that Levi, or his admirable translator, should fall into the phrase "civilian use," meaning, one supposes, the opposite of official government policy—that is, ordinary funerals employing cremation. But who else other than "civilians" were annihilated in the Lager?)

WHEN LEVI COMES to speak of shame, it is nevertheless not the absence of shame among Germans he invokes, though he condemns the "complicity and connivance" of the "majority of Germans" just before and during the Hitler years; rather, it is the loss of shame in the victims of the Lager, dispossessed of any civilizing vestige, reduced to the animal. The Lager "*anus mundi*," dominated "from dawn to dusk by hunger, fatigue, cold, and fear," "ultimate drainage site of the German universe," was a condition without reciprocity, where you sought to succor and relieve only yourself, to take care of yourself alone.

Shame returned with the return of freedom, retrospectively. In the "gray zone" of Lager oppression, contaminated victims collaborated with contaminating persecutors. Arrival at Auschwitz meant "kicks and punches right away, often in the face; an orgy of orders screamed with true or simulated rage; complete nakedness after being stripped; the shaving off of all one's hair; the outfitting in rags," and some of these depredations were conducted by fellow-victims appointed as functionaries.

Again and again Levi emphasizes the diminishment of every human trait, the violated modesty, the public evacuation, the satanically inventive brutality, the disorientation and desperation. He describes the absolute rule of "small sa-traps"—the common criminals who became Kapos; the wretched *Bettmachieher*, whose sole job was to measure the orderliness of straw pillows with a maniacal string and who had the power to punish "publicly and savagely"; the overseers of the "work that was purely persecutory"; the "Special Squads" that operated the crematoria for the sake of a few weeks more of life, only to be replaced and thrown into the fire in turn.

These squads, Levi explains, "were made up largely of Jews. In a certain sense this is not surprising, since the La-

ger's main purpose was to destroy Jews, and, beginning in 1943, the Auschwitz population was 90-95 percent Jews."

(Here I interrupt to remind the reader of William Styron's choice in *Sophie's Choice*, wherein we are given, as the central genocidal emblem of Lager policy in those years, a victim who is not a Jew. Let no one misconstrue this remark. The point is not that Jews suffered more than anyone else in the camps, or even that they suffered in greater numbers; concerning suffering there can be no competition or hierarchy. To suggest otherwise would be monstrous. Those who suffered at Auschwitz suffered with an absolute equality, and the suffering of no one victimized group or individual weighs more in human anguish than that of any other victimized group or individual. But note: Catholic Poland, for instance—language, culture, land—continues, while European Jewish civilization—language, culture, institutions—was wiped out utterly; and that, for Jewish history, is the different and still more terrible central meaning of Auschwitz. It is, in fact, what defines the Holocaust, and distinguishes it from the multiple other large-scale victimizations of the Nazi period.)

"From another point of view," Levi continues, "one is stunned by this paroxysm of perfidy and hatred: it must be the Jews who put the Jews into the ovens; it must be shown that the Jews, the subrace, the submen, bow to any and all humiliation, even to destroying themselves." Levi admits that merely by virtue of his having stayed alive, he never "fathomed [the Lager] to the bottom." The others, the "drowned," he maintains, those who went down to the lees of suffering and annihilation, were the only true fathomers of that perfidy and hatred.

LEVI'S reflections appear to be fathoming enough. *The Drowned and the Saved* is much less a book of narrative and incident than it is of siftings of the most sordid deposits of the criminal imagination—the inescapable struggle of a civilized mind to bore through to the essence and consequence of degradation and atrocity. Levi is not the first to observe that "where violence is inflicted on man it is also inflicted on language," though he may be among the first to inform us of the life-or-death role of language in the Lager. Simply, not to understand German was to go under at once: "the rubber truncheon was called *der*

Dolmetscher, the interpreter: the one who made himself understood to everybody."

Levi had studied some German at the university to prepare himself as a chemist. He learned more in Auschwitz—grotesquely distorted barbarisms which he deliberately held onto years later, "for the same reason I have never had the tattoo removed from my left arm." As for the tattoo itself—"an autochthonous Auschwitzian invention," "gratuituous, an end in itself, pure offense," "a return to barbarism"—Levi, a secular Jew, is careful to note that Leviticus 19:28 forbids tattooing "precisely in order to distinguish Jews from the barbarians." Even newborn babies, he reports, were tattooed on arrival in Auschwitz.

ALL THIS, and considerably more, Levi gathers up under the chilling heading of "Useless Violence," which he defines as "a deliberate creation of pain that was an end in itself." What else was the purpose of the vindictive halt of a boxcar of Jews at an Austrian railroad station, where, while the guards laughed, "the German passengers openly expressed their disgust" at "men and women squatting wherever they could, on the platforms and in the middle of the tracks"? What else was the purpose of emptying out nursing homes filled with elderly sick people already near death and hauling them off to Auschwitz to be gassed? Or forcing grown men to lap up soup like dogs by depriving them of spoons (of which there were tens of thousands at Auschwitz)? Or using human ash from the crematoria to make "gravel" paths for the SS village that ruled the camp? Or selling human hair to the German textile industry for mattress ticking? Or locking human beings into decompression chambers "to establish at what altitude human blood begins to boil: a datum that can be obtained in any laboratory at minimum expense and without victims, or even can be deduced from common tables"?

A spare sampling from Levi's meditation on the German abominations, some familiar, some not. Cardinal John O'Connor's theologizing not long ago—which led him to identify the torments of Auschwitz as a Jewish gift to the world—is no doubt indisputably valid Roman Catholic doctrine concerning the redemptive nature of suffering; but, much as the observation was intended to confer grace on the victims, it strikes me as impossible, even for a committed Christian, even for an angel of God, to speak of re-

demption and Auschwitz in the same breath. What we learn overwhelmingly from Levi is this: if there is redemption in it, it cannot be Auschwitz; and if it is Auschwitz, it is nothing if not unholy. Let no one mistake Primo Levi. If an upright forehead and a spirit pure mean forgoing outrage for the sake of one lofty idea or another—including the renunciation of hatred for the designers of the crematoria—then Primo Levi is as sullied as anybody else who declines to be morally neutered in the name of superior views.

He is in fact not morally neutered, and never was. He is not a "forgiver" (only someone with a clouded conscience would presume to claim that right on behalf of the murdered), and he is not dedicated, as so many believe, to an absence of rancor toward the strategists of atrocity and their followers. He is, as he asserts, a scientist and a logician: nowhere in Levi's pages will you find anything even remotely akin to the notion of "hate the sin, not the sinner." He is not an absurdist or a surrealist; nowhere does he engage in such severance. On the contrary, his preeminent theme is responsibility: "The true crime, the collective, general crime of almost all Germans of that time was that of lacking the courage to speak."

ONE THINKS, accordingly, of those unmoved German citizens waiting for a train on a station platform, compelled to hold their noses in revulsion as the freight cars, after passing through miles of unpeopled countryside, disgorged their dehumanized prey—a "relief stop" conceived in malice and derision. In his final chapter, "Letters from Germans," Levi quotes a correspondent who pleads with him "to remember the innumerable Germans who suffered and died in their struggle against iniquity." This letter and others like it bring Levi to the boiling point. He scorns the apologists, the liars, the "falsely penitent." He recalls his feelings when he learned that *Survival in Auschwitz* would be published in Germany:

Yes, I had written the book in Italian for Italians, for my children, for those who did not know, those who did not want to know, those who were not yet born, those who, willing or not, had assented to the offense; but its true recipients, those against whom the book was aimed like a gun were they, the Germans. Now the gun was loaded. . . . I would corner them, tie them before a mirror. . . . Not that handful of high-ranking culprits, but them, the people, those I had

seen from close up, those from among whom the SS militia were recruited, and also those others, those who had believed, who not believing had kept silent, who did not have the frail courage to look into our eyes, throw us a piece of bread, whisper a human word.

He quotes from *Mein Kampf*; he reminds his "polite and civil interlocutors, members of a people who exterminated mine," of the elections that put Hitler into office, and of *Kristallnacht*; he points out that "enrollment in the SS was voluntary," and that heads of German families were entitled, upon application, to receive clothing and shoes for both children and adults from the warehouses at Auschwitz. "Did no one ask himself where so many children's shoes were coming from?" And he concludes with a *j'accuse* directed toward "that great majority of Germans who accepted in the beginning, out of mental laziness, myopic calculation, stupidity, and national pride the 'beautiful words' of Corporal Hitler."

THE DROWNED AND THE SAVED is a book of catching-up after decades of abstaining. It is a book of blows returned by a pen on fire. The surrender to fury in these burning chapters does not swallow up their exactness—the scientist's truthful lens is not dissolved—but Levi in the violated voice of this last complete work lets fly a biblical ululation that its predecessors withheld: *thy brother's blood cries up from the ground*. I do not mean that Levi has literally set down those words; but he has, at long last, unleashed their clamor.

And what of the predecessor-volumes? What of their lucid calm, absence of hatred, magisterial equanimity, unaroused detachment? Readers have not misconstrued Levi's tone, at least not until now. *The Drowned and the Saved* makes it seem likely that the restraint of 40 years was undertaken out of a consistent adherence to an elevated *idée fixe*, possibly to a self-deception: a picture of how a civilized man ought to conduct himself when he is documenting savagery. The result was the world's consensus: a man somehow set apart from retaliatory passion. A man who would not trade punches. A transparency; a pure spirit. A vessel of clear water.

I spoke earlier of creeping fuses, mutedness, the slow accretion of an insurmountable pressure. "The Furies . . . perpetuate the tormentor's work by denying peace to the tormented." But all that was subterranean. Then came the suicide.

Consider now an image drawn from Levi's calling. Into a vessel of clear water—tranquil, innocuous—drop an unaccustomed ingredient: a lump of potassium, say, an alkali metal that reacts with water so violently that the hydrogen gas given off by the process will erupt into instant combustion. One moment, a beaker of unperturbed transparency. The next moment, a convulsion: self-destruction.

The unaccustomed ingredient, for Levi, was rage. "Suicide," he reflects in *The Drowned and the Saved*—which may be seen, perhaps and after all, as the bitterest of suicide notes—"is an act of man and not of the animal. It is a meditated act, a noninstinctive, unnatural choice." In the Lager, where human beings were driven to become animals, there were almost no suicides. Améry, Borowski, Celan, and ultimately Levi did not destroy themselves until some time after they were released. Levi waited more than 40 years; and he did not become a suicide until he let passion in, and returned the blows. If he is right about Améry—that Améry's willingness to

trade punches is the key to his suicide—then he has deciphered for us his own suicide as well.

What we know now—we did not know it before *The Drowned and the Saved*—is that at bottom Levi could not believe in himself as a vessel of clear water standing serenely apart. It was not detachment. It was dormancy, it was latency, it was potentiality; it was inoperativeness. He was always conscious of how near to hand the potassium was. I grieve that he equated rage—the rage that speaks for mercifulness—with self-destruction. A flawed formula. It seems to me it would not have been a mistake—and could not have been misinterpreted—if all of Primo Levi's books touching on the German hell had been as vehement, and as pointed, as the last, the most remarkable.

CYNTHIA OZICK

Cynthia Ozick is the author, most recently, of *The Messiah of Stockholm* (Knopf).

WHAT THE NOVELIST KNOWS

The Art of the Novel

by Milan Kundera

translated by Linda Asher

(Grove Press, 165 pp., \$16.95)

There exists nowadays a literary genre that promises to perpetuate itself, yet is made up of books doomed to instant oblivion—namely, academic works in the humanities and social sciences. The built-in obsolescence has a specific cause: the authors seem to feel that the precision of the observations they relate is everything and the manner in which those observations are presented is nothing. Thus the proliferation, in such books, of statistics, graphs, and diagrams, as though it were necessary to prop up ad infinitum a thesis that shocks no one. In fact, the genre's perpetuation stems from a different source: publication is a prerequisite for tenure in universities and for the promotion of researchers.

Such melancholy thoughts came to me several years ago when I first read an essay by Milan Kundera on Kafka. Kundera "knew" as much as any Kafka spe-

cialist, but he didn't write like those other authors. He could be at the same time new and simple, could study in detail and yet generalize, could speak of the book and of the world. Who knows, perhaps he, too, had counted Kafka's words, and traced clever little drawings and diagrams. But if so, he kept them to himself. In short, Kundera had written an essay: that is, a text of knowledge and reflection which does not forget that it is also literature.

Kundera has gathered together some of his essays, including the one on Kafka, and two interviews, in *The Art of the Novel*. (It is his first book written originally in French.) And in reading it, I had a surprise: I discovered that he develops a thesis completely different from the flattering one that I have just formulated. Kundera's essay asserts the powerlessness of the essay. I should be more

precise and say that this assertion concerns the essay's powerlessness to fulfill certain tasks, in contrast to the art of the novel, which Kundera also practices admirably, and which is the main reason for his fame. Asking himself to what and to whom he still remains attached in this disappointing world, Kundera eliminates God and man, the motherland and the people, and even the future, and retains only one idol: the discredited heritage of Cervantes, the wisdom of the novel. How does the novel earn such a place of honor? What makes it so unsurpassable?

It must be said at the outset that Kundera's interest in the novel is, above all, as a vehicle for knowledge. Not that the novel is exclusively that. But it is in this direction, he feels, that one should look for its claim to glory: in its cognitive capacities. The novelist is seized with a passion to know. Like an explorer, he hurls himself at the world. He does not invent, he discovers. He unveils a truth.

Of what world does the novel speak the truth? Of the human one, of course. The novel is an inquiry into the enigma of the self—or, as Kundera also likes to say, of existence. To be sure, the novelist invents characters, but these characters are put into the service of an existential interrogation. This is what every novelist does; the good novelist is the one who knows how to push the exploration to its end, the one who is not merely content to formulate a purely subjective opinion about this or that "existential problem," but who succeeds in "seizing its essence." In this way the novel leads to genuine knowledge, and this knowledge is precious.

The novel as knowledge: this is an idea that Kundera has taken from Hermann Broch, and beyond Broch, from a long tradition that can be traced back to Goethe or (why not?) to Aristotle. It is an idea of art that is in conflict with other ideas of art: for example, with the idea

that the novel, like any work of art, is above all a place where one can pour forth one's ego and impose it on others ("the most grotesque version of the will to power," comments Kundera); or the idea that the novel is a means of indoctrinating others; or again (and this may be the most widespread opinion these days) the idea that the novel is an object of pure aesthetic contemplation, a text where all is form and where the only law is the law of harmony.

thetes, Kundera knows that harmonious forms and the manipulation of words are not ends, but means—means of furthering the knowledge of human life.

Still, it is not enough to say that the novel is knowledge. One must also add that this knowledge is of a particular type, a type accessible *only* to the novel. Here again, Kundera follows Broch, who said: "To discover that which only a novel can discover is the novel's sole *raison d'être*." The key word here is "can." It is

not a matter of precedence; Broch does not say, It is not enough for the novel to illustrate pre-established truths. That is a matter of impossibility by definition; the novel's truth is, by any other means, "unpronounceable." Thus Orwell, for example, is not a true novelist, since one could have formulated his message (though no one did) just as well, or better, in an essay. Conversely, "Kafka told us more about our human condition than any sociological or political reflection ever could." In short, "the wisdom of the novel is different from that of philosophy."

But in what precisely does this difference, this specificity, consist? Kundera offers several answers to this difficult question.

(1) Might the difference reside in the object of knowledge? "The novel doesn't examine reality but existence.

And existence is not

what happened; existence is the realm of human possibilities, all that man can become, all that he is capable of." The novel deals with the possible; history, with the real. Here again we are back with Aristotle, who opposed "that which took place," the proper subject of history, to "that which might happen," the subject of literature, and who asserted that literature, by this token, was more noble and more philosophical than history.

But I do not feel myself enlightened by this Aristotelean wisdom. On the one hand, reality is not outside of the possible: it is only a fragment of it. (The thing



DRAWING BY VINT LAWRENCE FOR THE NEW REPUBLIC

Kundera is not at all indifferent to this last feature of the work of art. He tells us, for instance, that while writing his novels he is under the mysterious spell of the number seven (*The Art of the Novel* itself consists of seven chapters), and of various mathematical proportions. He could also subscribe to Francis Ponge's formula, "To side with things is to end up with words," since, in the final analysis, his exploration of existential situations is nothing more than the "pursuit of a few fleeting definitions." How can one do otherwise when one has only words at one's disposal? But, unlike pure aes-

must have been possible, since it became real.) And, as Kundera himself notes, history performs a task parallel to that of the poet. It, too, reveals possibilities inherent in the human condition; it, too, discovers rather than invents. All the poet can do is to *precede* history—as is indeed what happened with Kafka's novels, which described possibilities that have since become real. The difference is thus not one of nature, but only of timing.

ON THE other hand, history (the thing written, not the course of events) is not merely the indifferent recording of real matters, of what happened. The latter may be found in archives; but archives are only the point of departure, the raw material, of history. As much as the novel, history is construction. It is choice (from among all the facts, why select some?) and arrangement (why this order, and not that one?) put down in words of various registers: direct style (quotation), scenic details, panoramic views, abstract reflections. There is only one major difference. The related facts must not only be possible, but real as well. "Narrated history is a true novel," Raymond Aron used to say. To which one might add that novelists do not proscribe themselves from making use of this very reality: in Kundera's own novels, the invasion of Prague does not arise, alas, only from the basic possibilities which the novelist seeks to depict.

One may reply that novels make for more pleasant reading; but surely there are good and bad historians, just as there are good and bad novelists. And history is less philosophical than fiction only if it decides to be so. The historian, too, chooses as the subject of his work that which he deems to be revealing of the human condition, and he does not abstain from questioning its meaning. To forbid oneself reflection need not be one of the rules of the historian's profession.

At times Kundera also formulates a somewhat different response: "Historiography describes the history of society, not that of man." But here again the remark only applies to certain forms of history. In the past it was assumed that, for a history, the important matters were the events relating to states, the great battles, the royal weddings. But historians have since delved into the personal behavior of men and women, and even into their mentalities. Kundera cites, as an example of a fact that would have escaped historians, the massacre of dogs in Czechoslova-

kia. But didn't a noted historian just devote one of his works to the no less enigmatic massacre of cats in France?

(2) Might the difference lie in the contents of the truth as discovered, on the one hand, by the novelist, and on the other, by his hardworking rivals? Kundera seems to suggest as much, but the examples he cites tend to convince me that the opposite may be true. He evokes the rationalism and determinism of Leibniz and pits it against Sterne's "unreasonable" digressions. But before Sterne, and in a purely philosophical language, Rousseau wanted to define man by his capacity to escape determining circumstances—in other words, by his free will. In contrast to the 19th century, proud of its scientific reasoning, Kundera poses a Flaubert who "discovers" stupidity; but that century had no shortage of philosophical detractors of reason and progress.

In the 20th century, reason triumphs; but the novel (Kafka, Hasek, Broch) says something else. It reveals that it is the irrational which takes over the world, or rather an "autotelism": art for art's sake, business for business's sake, the willpower of willpower. But, as Kundera reminds us, Heidegger said it too—only after Kafka. So one *can* tell in a non-fictional language the truths discovered by the novel. And since research into the essence of human circumstances is the peculiar function not only of the novel, but also of "phenomenology" (even if the novel can lay claim to seniority), doesn't the novel's specificity here, again, begin to blur?

Let's go further and suppose that the truths discovered by novelists had never been anticipated or repeated by philosophers or political scientists, that Rousseau, Nietzsche, and Heidegger never existed. This still does not solve the problem. To show us the novel's originality, Kundera needs to name it; but having done so, he proves that one can reach it by non-fictional means. The very act by which he supports his statement contradicts its content.

(3) Perhaps the difference lies in the status accorded to the truth unveiled by the novelist, in the mode of the statement rather than in its content? Thus Kundera directs a rebuke (though respectful) to Broch, for having presented the essay on the degradation of values in *The Sleepwalkers* as his own opinion, rather than as a novelistic proposition—as a statement rather than a hypothesis. Not only should the poet never be content with illustrating pre-established truths,

under threat of forfeiting his position as poet; even in the case of the truths at which he has arrived by his own means, he should never impose, only propose. "The poet never affirmeth," as Sir Philip Sidney has already said. This is why Kundera loses patience with critics who reduce novels to the ideas that have been attributed to novelists.

BUT ONCE AGAIN the distinction seems too sharp. Kundera is right in saying that the novel proposes more than it imposes. But does this mean that everything that is not fiction takes the form of a dogmatic statement, an unshakable certainty? Doesn't the dividing line lie rather between the truth as dogma and the truth as an object of research, given that this quest is, in principle, endless? Lessing imagined God holding in one hand the certain truth and in the other only the search for truth. Lessing himself, by preferring the latter, opted not for the novel instead of philosophy, but for dialogue instead of monologue. Dialogue (real dialogue) consists in a search for truth. If it had already been found, there would be monologue. If one did not look for it, there would be only a babel of discordant voices taking no account of one another. And the philosophical essay, for instance, can choose between the dogmatic monologue and the dialogical quest. Thus narrative and dialogue are not in conflict; novelistic truth and dialogical truth are on the same side.

(4) Hannah Arendt once wrote that "no philosophy, no analysis, no aphorism, however profound it may be, can compare in intensity and in fullness of meaning to a story well told." But where do this intensity and this fullness of meaning come from? From the fact that the narrative confronts us not with an abstract proposition, but with the evocation of an event. The characteristic of the novel is the representation of the particular, which is in this respect more powerful than the general. The event is like a subject without a predicate: it falls forever to new readers to search for the missing predicate (even if the subject sometimes balks at predicates that are too alien). Kundera reflects on this characteristic of the novel, finding in it a manifestation of the *Lebenswelt* that is neglected, according to Husserl, in philosophical or scientific discourse. But what here distances the novelist from the philosopher again brings him closer to the historian, who knows, as he does, the voluptuousness of particular things (to

use Leibniz's words). The social scientists themselves are not unaware of the resources to be found in the stories of individuals, from the Rat Man and the Wolf Man of Freud to the case histories of Oliver Sacks.

The novel certainly offers a particular kind of knowledge. But it is not a kind of knowledge massively opposed to all that is not fiction. Because of its varied aspects, it is at times closer to the dialogical essay, at times to micro-sociology, at times to this or that form of history. Its specificity is not elementary but composite, in the same way that one molecule is different from another even though their atoms are the same.

Kundera himself suggests that the interest of his essays lies in their being the confession of a novelist, an indirect commentary on his own craft. But they are, of course, more than that. They incite us to reflect on fiction and philosophy, knowledge and truth; and they brilliantly illustrate the art of the essay.

TZVETAN TODOROV

Tzvetan Todorov works at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique in Paris. He is the author of *Literature and Its Theorists: A Personal View of Twentieth-Century Criticism* (Cornell University Press).

Peterson spends little time on the youth of his three protagonists, but one does learn that they all came from poor, or at best very modest, farm backgrounds. All three had a hard time getting an education; Clay never went to college at all. He did get a good legal education, though, from an excellent Virginia lawyer, and he had never been quite as poor as he liked to claim in later years. With some help from friends, Webster made it to, and graduated from, Dartmouth. And Calhoun, whose early struggles were real enough, went through Yale and Litchfield Law School. They were genuinely self-made men, then, even though their abilities were quickly recognized.

Political success came early to all three. Clay entered the House of Representatives at 34 and was immediately elected Speaker, an office he occupied with distinction for over ten years, demonstrating real impartiality and great dexterity throughout. Webster and Calhoun were no older when they were first elected to Congress, and both made their mark at once as well. All three served in various cabinets, as secretary of war or as secretary of state. And all three died much richer than their parents ever were. Calhoun married money, the other two made it as lawyers. (Webster, in addition, received large sums from his wealthy State Street supporters.) Clay and Calhoun had less than happy marriages, Webster did better. All suffered through their children, who either died young or turned out badly.

If this sounds cold or bare, it is because this seems to be all that is worth knowing about the private lives of these supremely public men. There may well be more to say about the inner development and psychology of such men; but Peterson's are wholly political biographies, and family histories appear only discretely, at the beginning and at the end of the book. Personal matters are not allowed to impinge in any way on affairs of state, or on the careers that probably did mean everything, in the end, to these often wretched men.

The bulk of Peterson's study concerns the stands that these men took on the great public issues of the day: the War of 1812 at the very beginning of their careers, then the tariffs, the two compromises on the admission of Western Territories to statehood, the Bank "War," revenue sharing with the states, Indian removal, the annexation of Texas, the Mexican War, and finally the Fugitive Slave Law. In addition to their views on these issues, we are told what Clay,

GONE WITH THE WIND

The Great Triumvirate: Webster, Clay, and Calhoun by Merrill D. Peterson

(Oxford University Press, 573 pp., \$27.95)

The title of Merrill Peterson's book may suggest something like Plutarch's *Parallel Lives*, but it is nothing of the sort. Peterson may not have set out to debunk his heroes, but after 500-odd pages neither he nor his readers can like or admire them. Moreover, Plutarch always managed to make even a disreputable Greek look better than his Roman counterpart. Peterson shows no favoritism; he dislikes all three of these "great" senators equally. His disdain is distributed fairly, and rightly so. Henry Clay was an unprincipled opportunist. Daniel Webster was a sleazy windbag. John Calhoun was a fanatical zealot in an evil cause. The most interesting thing about them is that they were regarded as great men by many of their contemporaries; no less a man than Emerson worshipped Webster.

Clay, Webster, and Calhoun were contemporaries in age and in their political careers, and they constantly moved in and out of one another's orbits. That they should always have been seen as a trio was quite natural. After Jackson's presidency, moreover, they really did stand out, because the occupants of the White House were so insignificant. What distinguished all three men, however, what made them so conspicuous, was their stupendous oratorical talent. Nineteenth-century Americans loved to listen to speeches, es-

pecially political ones. They could be moved to tears for three hours by what now seems unbearably overblown rhetoric. Morally uplifting public discourse was just as popular; it was the age of Lyceums, and of many other intellectually and socially improving lectures. In New England these institutions may have been a continuation of the tradition of (if not a relief from) day-long Sabbath sermons. But by all accounts listening to speeches, addresses, and other oratorical displays was regarded as the best sort of entertainment all over the country, and certainly in both chambers of Congress.

In addition to being exceptionally effective speakers, Clay, Webster, and Calhoun obviously had remarkable powers of political survival, winning elections easily over and over again. In the end, however, they failed miserably, for all three really wanted only one thing in life—to be president of the United States—and their countrymen sensibly enough refused to choose them. Posterity would judge them harshly, too, as Peterson does, for doing less than nothing to avert the Civil War. It is now simply impossible to think of the decades preceding the national bloodbath without a hovering sense of doom, which makes the actions and the preoccupations of these politicians seem especially trivial.

Webster, and Calhoun did during every presidential election, and how they dealt with the presidents with whom they had to come to terms, or to oppose.

In Calhoun's case, there was a flip-flop from ardent nationalism to an equally passionate support of states' rights and nullification; he realized that his power base in South Carolina would melt away if he did not join the extremists in resisting the tariff of 1828. He never changed again. But even Calhoun, the single-cause politician, once he joined the Southern resistance to any possible weakening of slavery, was available for deals and allies anywhere he could find them in pursuit of his object. All these men were creatures of shifting alliances and calculations. Clay and Webster never underwent a transformation comparable to Calhoun's, because they were flexible all along.

In Clay's career we can discern at least a few steady lines of belief and conduct. He generally supported (though not without compromise) the American System, that is, government support for manufacturing, roads, and canals, and for the general "internal" developments that he regarded as necessary for rapid industrial growth. His second, and noble, cause was Latin American independence, and the support of liberal and republican politics there. For the rest, Clay preached compromise, give-and-take, civility, flexibility, and splitting the difference. That, of course, is the way interest-group politics are supposed to work; but the compromises can still amount to a disaster for those whose lives and futures are being bargained away. Clay's compromises were all in-

tended to insure the survival of slavery, and to reassure the South. And although he made many a fine speech against slavery, he owned slaves himself. The Abolitionists certainly had no friend in him.

Neither did Webster help them, but then Webster had no steady causes at all, as far as one can see, except getting ahead. He began as a federalist, according to Peterson, but eventually he held to a democratic capitalism, that is, to the assumption that the free market in a free political system offered the best chance for most people to do well. These beliefs did not result in any legislative achievement. Webster's greatest successes were in arguments before the Supreme Court, where he defended "vested interests" against all efforts by state legislatures to revoke monopolistic charters and to encourage new entrepreneurs. Even in those performances, however, there was less than met the eye—or rather, the ear—since he added no new ideas to arguments that others had already made before the lower court in each case. "Godlike Dan" simply knew how to talk his audience into ecstasies of admiration.

THE thread that holds the account of all these doings together is chronology. What we get in Peterson's book is the equivalent of every issue of three daily provincial newspapers for some 30 years. It is a steady stream of reports of the political events of the moment, just as they happened and as they were perceived at that time, who did what and who said what then and there. There is no effort to integrate the political activities of the senators into a larger pattern of events, which history, with its retrospective vision, should be uniquely able to do. And there is only an occasional explanation of what contemporary events, such as the tariff controversies, the independent Treasury, or even the Mexican War, were really about. Peterson gives no sense of the political world in which these individual politicians and citizens moved. We just jump from one month to the next. That is certainly how we live, but one does expect more than the surface of reality from a long book about three men who, we are told, were important political figures in the eyes of their fellow citizens.

There seems to be very little middle ground in the writing of American history now. We are treated either to interpretations that do not trouble to refer to facts, or to a mountain of raw clippings. The pure interpreters seem to have only the most tenuous hold on historical evi-

dence at all, presumably because most of their productions are designed to offer an instant mirror for our own time and place, or to fit some political agenda. The other kind of American history goes to the opposite extreme; like the present volume, it is so unreflective that it is not even a narrative at all. We seem incapable of finding a balance somewhere between the imaginative drivel that passes for interpretive history and the heaps of undigested mini-facts.

THIS IS particularly regrettable in Peterson's case, because there are some fine pages in his book. He provides an excellent sense of personal politics in an era of weak parties and shifting alignments. The description of speeches, and of the responses of audiences to them, is very vivid. We do not hear enough about how Congress actually worked, but there are excellent accounts of individual encounters between senators; the relationship between the senators and President Jackson is lucidly portrayed. And we meet the crotchety John Quincy Adams as he occasionally weaves in and out of these pages; his oddity comes across clearly, and not at all disagreeably.

There is, best of all, a penetrating analysis of the political theory of Calhoun. In both his day and ours, Calhoun has enjoyed a wholly undeserved reputation for writing a tract full of deep, "metaphysical," and very significant political ideas; in fact, as Peterson shows very clearly, the metaphysics amount to nothing but pointless abstractions. *A Disquisition on Government* is a very confused and incoherent pamphlet, one that makes no sense at all unless one knows that the interest of the minority that must be preserved is that of the slave-owners.

Freedom is necessary, according to Calhoun, because without it able and talented men could not develop their powers and rise to the top. But Calhoun believed in the necessity of government to control unruly mankind and therefore argued that he was a conservative. Governments, however, pose a danger to those whom they rule, he argued, and a constitution, and a wide electoral suffrage, are necessary to control them. But this, in turn, creates a danger of the tyranny of the majority, which can only be thwarted if every minority has a veto power over legislation. That is the famous theory of "concurrent majorities." (Calhoun saw it at work in the Polish Diet, an institution in which he alone found any merit.) And having presented

POSTERITY

For every newborn child
We planted one live tree,
A green posterity,
So death could be beguiled
By root and branch and flower
To abdicate some power.
And we were reconciled.

Now we must move away
Leaving the trees behind
For anyone to climb.
It is a winter day;
Snow, as we turn our backs,
Obliterates our tracks.
The trees will bloom in May.

LINDA PASTAN

a picture of ruthless conflict among individuals and groups, Calhoun simply turned around to reassure his readers that harmony and compromise would be very easy under his scheme. The essay ends with a tribute to the Roman Republic, and to the British mixed constitution.

With his obsession with corruption and his martial tones, Calhoun was closer to the "republican" writers of the Revolutionary period than to his own contemporaries, or to Madison. The latter believed that popular government depended on shifting minorities which would compose temporary majorities and which would thus have every incentive to come to terms with each other. He is, therefore, a writer who should not be ignored by those who are currently resuscitating that "republican" tradition in the hope of finding a pure and native source for public virtue and solidarity. As a defender of slavery as a positive good, especially when compared to the disorders of liberal capitalism, Calhoun was surely an authentic heir to the "republican" ethos of antiquity. That he was shallow, and a menace to the real welfare of his country, is also relevant. At the very least Calhoun tells us something about the implications of republicanism in the modern world. In its emphasis on martial discipline, social cohesion, political agreement, and conformity as requirements for public policy, republicanism now is a threat to personal freedom and justice. It is after all not true that we have had no experience of established ideologies of solidarity in the 20th century.

It is, indeed, one of the merits of this uneven book that it reminds us of this and also warns us not to indulge in uninformed ancestor worship, which is not in keeping with democratic values and the demands of intellectual honesty. For it seems perfectly evident that many of our contemporary senators are more intelligent, principled, and decent people than Peterson's triumvirate. We no longer drape our elected representatives in togas when we represent them in pictures or statues, and we do not encourage them to make long and empty speeches full of false analogies to Rome. The difference is encouraging, since it means that the taste and the judgment of both the public and the politicians have improved in the last hundred years.

JUDITH N. SHKLAR

Judith N. Shklar is John Cowles Professor of Government at Harvard University.

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one-third true. But it's judgment of a particular kind. As Carter's chief of staff, Hamilton Jordan, put it in his memoir: "It was always helpful for me to hear what Strauss was saying, because I knew that his 'ideas' were more accurately an amalgam of the collective thoughts and opinions of the Washington political and media establishments." What Strauss really sells to outsider presidents like Carter and Reagan (payment in ego) and to corporate clients (payment in cash) is Washington's blessing.

What he sells to journalists is more subtle. Strauss "gives good quote," as they say, and leaks when he's got something to leak. But it's not as a source that reporters value Strauss. They generally know blarney when they hear it. Jordan describes Strauss's technique of inventing a reason to talk to Carter, however briefly, so he could lunch out on, "As I was saying to the president. . ." What seduces journalists into Strauss's conspiracy of hype is more Strauss's mastery of the peculiar Washington style of flattery-by-insult ("How the hell are you, you old pigfucker?"); his genuine interest in *their* view of things (always a sure sign of wisdom in others), which he can recycle; in short, his warm embrace—his reassurance that there *is* a Washington establishment and they're in it.

Virtually everyone in Washington recognizes that Bob Strauss is 99 percent hot air, yet they all maintain this "elder statesman" and "Mr. Democrat" routine like some sort of elaborate prank on the rest of the world. Is it unsporting not to play along? I don't think so. It's a little too convenient for conservatives and Republicans that "Mr. Democrat" should be a man so obviously more interested in being seen as a friend of the president than in who the president happens to be. It's an insult to the Democratic Party—partly self-inflicted, to be sure—that its symbolic head should be a man whose political influence is out for hire to the highest bidder. And it's a telling comment on the Washington establishment that so laughably shallow a figure should be considered one of its "wise men."

Of course Strauss may be no different from the Democratic elder statesmen of the past. Someone like Clark Clifford worked harder to keep a patina of "law office" on his lobbying business, and came on like a Brahmin, in contrast to Strauss's po'boy routine. But basically the scam was the same.

In fact, every great capital probably has a Mr. Fixit, a self-promoting middleman who is a friend of all sides no matter how mutually opposed they may be. In Tehran, when you're in need of "judgment," you look up the elder statesman and wise man Manucher Ghorbanifar. He doesn't have much in common, spiritually, with the ruling ayatollahs. They let him make his millions and keep his body parts in one place because he's useful to them. But at least no one calls him "Mr. Shiite."

CORRESPONDENCE, from page 6

TARNISHED STERLING

To the editors:

In TNR's February 15 issue, both Michael Elliott ("Sammy and Rosie Get Paid") and Andrew Sullivan ("Land of Hope and Tories") inform your readers about how well the economy of Great Britain is doing. Just three lines were devoted to some of the difficulties being experienced there. The articles forgot to mention that ten percent of the labor force in Great Britain—more than three million people—is unemployed. Among the young and non-whites, the rate of unemployment is almost 20 percent. Britain's national health system, once admired worldwide, is close to collapse because of the refusal of the Thatcher government to provide adequate funding. Of course, the private health system, for those who can afford to pay, is flourishing. Britain's universities—once among the finest in the world—are heading rapidly for mediocrity because of Mrs. Thatcher's belief that expenditures in the public sector have been too high.

Benjamin Disraeli's fear, expressed 100 years ago, that there might develop two Britains, one for the rich and another for the poor—a possibility that he abhorred—is being realized in Mrs. Thatcher's Britain, and THE NEW REPUBLIC does not seem to be concerned about that tragedy.

DAVID ORLIKOW, M.P.
Ottawa, Canada

The editors welcome correspondence from readers. Letters should include the writer's full name, address, and telephone number; be typed double-spaced; and be held to under 200 words. Letters may be edited for space. Please address letters to: Correspondence, TNR, 1220 19th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

AMTRAK DIARIST

Train People

THE PREFERRED TOPIC of conversation on trains is airplane crashes. The second favorite is near misses. Third is all the things a train can hit on the tracks without the passengers feeling a thing, a category that apparently includes all vehicles up to the size of an 18-wheeler. Running a distant fourth among things one might discuss with strangers in the bar car are the sights to be seen outside.

I KNOW THIS because I have just spent 26 hours in the bar car of the Amtrak Crescent, riding from New Orleans to Washington. Train people fall into two broad categories. There are those with wanderlust, time on their hands, and a high threshold for discomfort. And those who regard boarding an airplane as an act of insanity. Train people, it should be said, are different from plane people. They simply ignore the various weird statistics that show flying to be safer than walking down the stairs, spitting, or watching the sun rise. They are not scientific but intuitive. "I just think that pilots do magic, and if you get up in the air, and he forgets his magic, kaboom," said one of the three doctors of philosophy in the bar car. He was traveling to Washington to sign copies of his latest book, and he wouldn't dream of flying.

MY CONDUCTOR told me that the number of airplane neurotics increases with the surge in publicity about plane crashes. The nice thing about trains, he accurately noted, is that "when the engine quits, you don't fall." The other nice thing about trains is that taxpayers subsidize your ticket. The bill that Amtrak presented to Congress this year came to \$581 million. I would like to say now how appreciative I feel toward taxpaying Americans. But really, you shouldn't have.

MAYBE BECAUSE they are so thankful to be paid to stay on the ground, train people have an anachronistic tendency to talk to people they don't know. Or perhaps they recognize a soulmate in a fellow passenger who has said no to planes. Anyway, train people are very touchy-feely. And once they dispense

with the Continental Crash in Denver, the congestion at National Airport, and the dozens of poor souls the Crescent has hit (train disasters, it is assumed, happen to those on the *outside*), they prove to be able and willing tour guides.

I TRAVELED WITH a British photographer who had never been south of the Mason-Dixon line. As I am from the South I know that Southern towns, no matter how tiny, possess at least one beauty parlor and one Baptist church, invariably called the First Baptist Church (might there be a Second Baptist Church?). My British companion, however, found this riveting. And I have to admit, even I was impressed when, in an Alabama hamlet, we passed a hybrid called B & J's First Baptist Church AND Beauty Parlor. Yet another surprise was the number of mobile homes parked beside the tracks. I asked my conductor, who has been riding over the same rails for 28 years, why, if you can park your home anywhere, you would put it beside the railroad tracks. "Life is full of mysteries," he said, right as rain.

ONE OF LIFE'S mysteries is how, in the six-by-four-foot space that was my berth, a 1950s genius in spatial relations managed to fit a bed, a sink, a lounge chair, two closets, a luggage rack, a toilet, three coat hangers, and a trash can. Granted, there wasn't much room left over for a mixer, but I would suggest to those who gnash their teeth and pull their hair thinking about overpopulation in the 21st century that old railroad men may have the answer. The cars were built over 40 years ago, and are considered quaintly adequate by their users. Twenty years ago, however, a partition ran down the center of the car, separating black passengers from white. As a result, the cars have bathrooms in the back and the front, with the ones in the front being conspicuously larger. Now, of course, they aren't black and white, but men's and ladies'. Guess whose is bigger.

LIKE MOST CITY BOYS, around country folk I have the bad habit of encouraging homespun wisdom. One of my pri-

vate fantasies is to chew tobacco on the front porch of a house in a town with a name like Hicksaw Ridge. Seated in rocking chairs, me and the other citizens of Hicksaw Ridge take turns spinning yarns. One of us might even hold a finger up toward the clear blue sky and say, "Gonna rain." This said, black clouds immediately appear on the horizon.

ON THE CRESCENT, I came the closest I ever have to living my fantasy. OK, so no one had ever heard of Hicksaw Ridge. But nearly everyone in the bar car was from some small Southern town. There was a moral to every story, and a story about every place we passed. Bet you never heard of Tallapoosa. It sits on the border of Alabama and Georgia, beside the tracks of the Crescent. Back at the turn of the century, recalled one of the conductors, it was called Possum Snout. But folks there just didn't like the sound of Possum Snout, and changed the name. In itself, this was mighty suspicious—change your name and maybe you got something to hide. Sure as shootin', just 80 years later the mayor of Tallapoosa gets caught with 11 other Tallapoosans siphoning gas from the public utility's pipeline. There's even been a book about it, called *The Dirty Dozen*.

AS DUSK FELL, the Crescent was about 40 miles shy of Atlanta. We rode through a town called Donaldsville. The best thing about Donaldsville, said my conductor, is its unusual Baptist church. Since, with the exception of B & J's, every Baptist church I had seen looked like every other Baptist church, I squinted to catch sight of a Baptist anomaly. As I expected, it was the same unimaginative square building, with the same white wooden sign in front. But since my conductor hadn't yet steered me wrong, I squinted harder. And sure enough, on the sign were the words: Second Baptist Church of God. Goes to show you, miracles will never cease.

MICHAEL M. LEWIS

Michael M. Lewis is at work on a book about investment banking.

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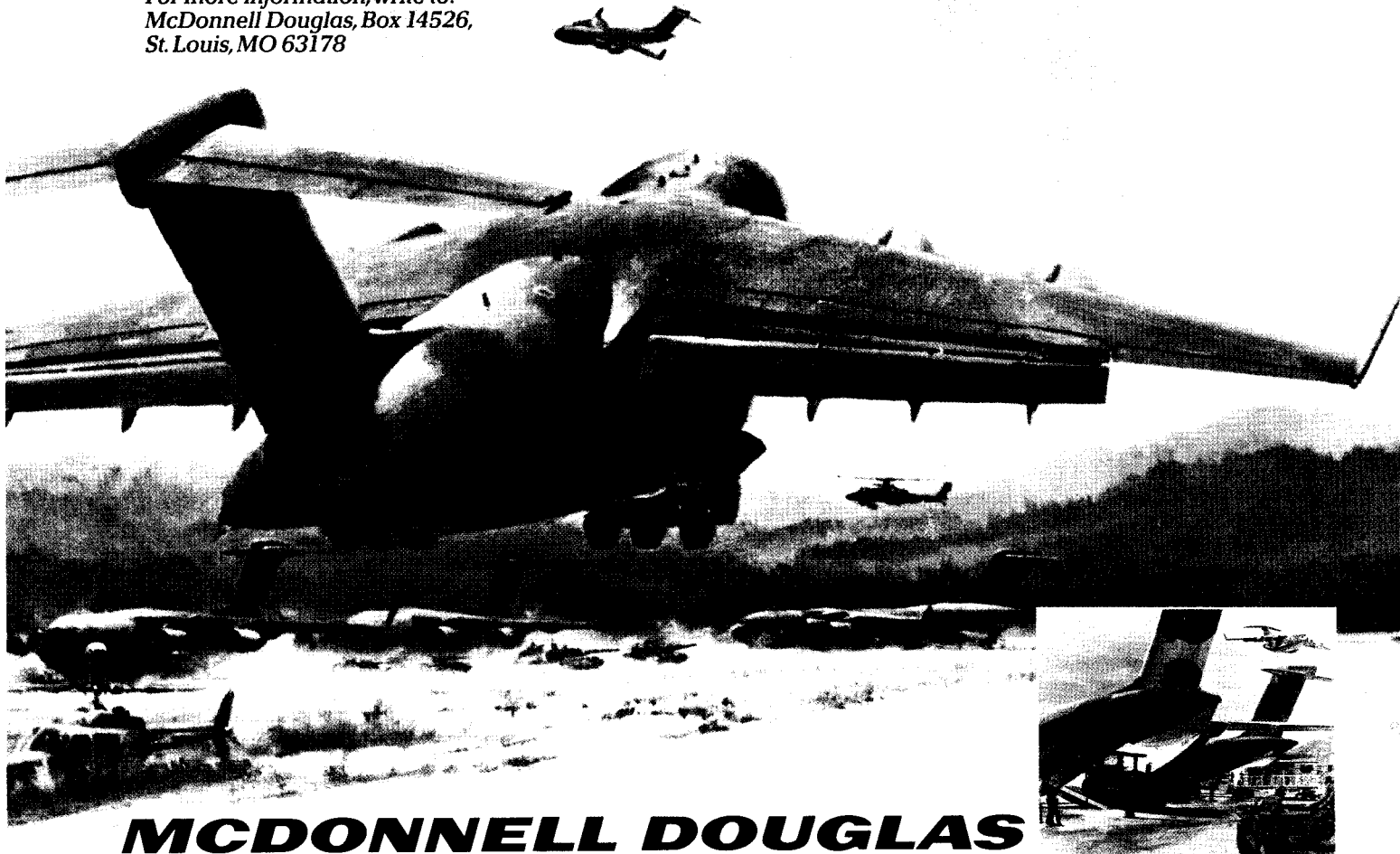
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